GotQuestions.org:

Who wrote the book of Galatians?

Answer

The author of Galatians is Paul, an apostle in the early church. The letter begins with the salutation: “Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers and sisters with me, To the churches in Galatia” (Galatians 1:1–2). Galatia was a Roman province in central Asia Minor, and the churches there had predominantly Gentile Christians. Paul’s letter to those churches played a crucial role in combating legalism.

After receiving the gospel from Paul with joy, the Galatian believers soon faced confusion introduced by false teachers, whom Paul calls “agitators” in Galatians 5:12. These agitators insisted on Gentile circumcision and adherence to the law for salvation. The agitators also questioned Paul’s apostleship, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and doubt. Paul’s response reflects the gravity of the situation, exposing the seriousness of the agitators’ false gospel (Galatians 1:6–9). He emphasizes that the gospel is complete and should not be altered, cautioning against errors that may arise when grace is deemed insufficient for salvation or spiritual growth (Galatians 3:2–3).

The epistle to the Galatians is one of the least debated Pauline work, but its seeming push against the Torah has led some scholars to erroneously presume that Paul rejected the Jewish law. Paul’s theology is sometimes compared to that of James, with claims of an alleged contradiction. However, Paul regarded the law as holy (Romans 7:12) and was not against circumcision (Acts 16:1–3). Rather, he opposed keeping the law as a requirement for salvation or even for sanctification. Paul’s gospel of grace was endorsed by other apostles, including James (Galatians 2:9–10). The key distinction lies in their emphasis: Paul focuses on being *declared* righteous before God, while James underscores being shown to be right with God, a theme also found in Paul’s letters (James 2:16–24; cf. Philippians 2:12–13). Both men agree that salvation comes by grace through faith, resulting in good deeds and godly living.

The relationship between faith and good deeds is a theme in the letter to the Galatians, as Paul addresses concerns that grace by faith may lead to

licentiousness. Paul clarifies that the purpose of grace is to produce righteous living. Because of grace, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and are called to live daily under His influence (Galatians 5:16).

Galatians serves as a counterbalance to both legalism and licentiousness. Paul emphasizes that the Savior provides redemption and forgiveness from the penalty of our sin. Salvation is not earned but given to those who trust in that Savior. The Christian life should align with the Spirit's control, guided by God's Word.

Blue Letter Bible:

Audience of Galatians

The Apostle Paul's letter to the Galatians was addressed to churches in the region of Galatia, a territory in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), which consisted of both Jewish and Gentile believers.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- Location:

Galatia was a region in Asia Minor, likely encompassing both the Roman province of Galatia in southern Anatolia and a larger area defined by the Celtic people, the Galatians, who settled in central Anatolia.

- Paul's Mission:

Paul had traveled to this region on one of his missionary journeys, establishing churches there.

- Audience:

The letter was addressed to these churches, which were likely diverse in their backgrounds, including both Jewish and Gentile converts to Christianity.

- Purpose:

Paul wrote the letter to address a controversy that had arisen in these churches, specifically regarding the necessity of adhering to the Mosaic Law (including circumcision) for Gentile Christians to be considered part of the Christian faith.

- Key Issue:

Paul argued that salvation came through faith in Jesus Christ, not through adherence to the Mosaic Law, and that Gentile Christians were not obligated to follow the Mosaic Law.

- Opponents:

Paul was responding to a group of Jewish Christians, sometimes referred to as "Judaizers," who were insisting that Gentile Christians needed to follow the Mosaic Law to be saved.

Summary of the Book of Galatians

Author: Galatians 1:1 clearly identifies the apostle Paul as the writer of the epistle to the Galatians.

Date of Writing: Galatians is one of the first New Testament books to be written, composed sometime soon after AD 49.

Purpose of Writing: The churches in Galatia were comprised of both Jewish and Gentile converts. Paul's purpose in writing to these churches was to confirm them in the faith, especially concerning justification by faith alone, apart from the works of the Law of Moses.

Galatians was written because the churches of that region were facing a theological crisis. The essential truth of justification by faith rather than by human works was being denied by the Judaizers—legalistic Jews who insisted that Christians must keep the Mosaic Law. In particular, the Judaizers insisted on circumcision as a requirement for Gentiles who wished to be saved. In other words, convert to Judaism *first*, and then you are eligible to become a Christian. When Paul learned that this heresy was being taught to the Galatian churches, he composed an epistle to emphasize our liberty in Christ and to counter the perversion of the gospel that the Judaizers promoted.

Key Verses:

Galatians 2:16: "Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but

Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Galatians 3:11: “Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’"

Galatians 4:5-6: “to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’"

Galatians 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 6:7: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.”

Brief Summary: The fact that we are justified by grace through faith means we have spiritual freedom. We are not under bondage to the dictates of the Old Testament Law. Paul soundly condemns anyone who would denigrate the grace of God and attempt to change the gospel (Galatians 1:8–10). He gives his apostolic credentials (Galatians 1:11–2:14) and emphasizes that righteousness comes through Christ not the works of the Law (Galatians 2:21). The Galatians must stand fast in their freedom and not be “entangled again with a yoke of bondage (that is, the Mosaic law)” (Galatians 5:1). Christian freedom is not an excuse to gratify one’s sin nature; rather, our freedom is an opportunity to love one another (Galatians 5:13; 6:7–10). The Christian life is to be lived in the power of the Spirit, not the flesh (Galatians 5:16–18). The flesh has been crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20); as a consequence, the Spirit will bear His fruit in the life of the believer (Galatians 5:22–23).

In the end, the issue is not whether a person is circumcised but whether he is a “new creation” (Galatians 6:15). Salvation is the work of the Spirit, and we must be born again (see John 3:3). External religious rites such as circumcision are of no value in the realm of the Spirit.

Connections: Throughout Paul’s epistle to the Galatians, saving grace—the gift of God—is juxtaposed against the Law of Moses, which cannot save. The Judaizers urged a return to the Mosaic Law as the source of justification, and

they were prominent in the early church. Even Peter was temporarily drawn into their web of deceit (Galatians 2:11–13). The themes connecting Galatians to the Old Testament center on Law vs. grace: the inability of the Law to justify (2:16); the believer's deadness to the Law (2:19); Abraham's justification by faith (3:6); the Law's bringing not God's salvation but His wrath (3:10); and love as the fulfillment of the Law (5:14). Believers are the spiritual children of Sarah, not Hagar—that is, we are children of the freewoman, not children of the slave; we have more in common with Isaac, the son of promise, than with Ishmael, the son of human effort (4:21–31).

The books of Galatians and James deal with two complementary aspects of Christianity. Galatians highlights the gospel of grace that produces righteous living (Galatians 3:13–14). James highlights the righteous living that proves faith. There is no conflict; James, too, emphasizes the new birth through the gospel (James 1:18), and Galatians spends its final two chapters applying the doctrine of *sola gratia* to practical Christian living.

Practical Application: One of the main themes of the book of Galatians is found in 3:11: "The righteous shall live by faith." We must stand firm in this truth. Any compromise with legalism or the mixture of human effort and the grace of God for salvation leads to heresy. If we could be saved through the keeping of the Law, then Jesus did not need to die (Galatians 2:21). Trying to save ourselves nullifies grace.

Not only are we saved by faith (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8–9), but the life of the believer in Christ—day by day, moment by moment—is lived by and through that faith (Galatians 2:20). Not that faith is something we conjure up on our own—it is the gift of God, not of works (see Ephesians 2:8–9)—but it is our responsibility and joy to exhibit our faith so that others will see the work of Christ in us and to grow in our faith by the application of spiritual disciplines (Bible study, prayer, obedience, etc.).

Jesus said we would be known by the fruit of our lives (Matthew 7:16), which should give evidence of the faith within us. All Christians should be diligent in striving to build upon the saving faith within us so that our lives will reflect Christ and others will "glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16, NKJV).

The churches in Galatia, a region in modern-day Turkey, were founded by

Paul and Barnabas during Paul's first missionary journey, and Paul later wrote a letter to these churches, addressing issues like the importance of grace over the law.

Here's a more detailed look:

Key Points:

- **Location:**

Galatia was a region in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

- **Founding:**

The apostle Paul and Barnabas established churches in Galatia during Paul's first missionary journey.

- **Paul's Letter:**

Churches in Galatia (modern-day Turkey).
Paul wrote a letter to "the churches in Galatia" (Galatians 1:2), addressing issues like the importance of salvation by grace rather than adherence to the law.

- **Challenges:**

The Galatian churches faced challenges, including pressure from Judaizers who taught that Gentile believers needed to follow Jewish laws to be saved.

- **Paul's Message:**

Paul's letter to the Galatians emphasizes that salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ and not through adherence to the law.

- **Cities in Galatia:**

Paul visited cities in Galatia, including Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.

Background:

- The region of Galatia was named after the Gauls, who settled there in the 3rd century BC.
- The Galatian churches were a mix of Jewish and Gentile converts.
- The Galatian churches were one of the first churches to integrate Gentile believers into the predominantly Jewish Christian faith.

Who were the Galatians?

The Galatians were a Celtic people who migrated to what is now central Turkey (Galatia) in the third century BC, and Paul's letter to the Galatians addressed churches in that region, likely those he founded during his missionary journeys.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **Origins:**

The Galatians were a Celtic group, possibly related to the Gauls, who migrated from Europe to Asia Minor in the third century BC.

- **Location:**

They settled in the region of Galatia, which is in modern-day central Turkey, around the area of Ankara.

- **Roman Province:**

In 25 BC, the Romans established a province of Galatia, encompassing the area where the Galatians had settled, and including areas to the south.

- **Paul's Letter:**

The New Testament book of Galatians is a letter written by Paul to churches in the region of Galatia, where he had traveled on his missionary journeys.

- **Debate Over Recipient:**

There is some scholarly debate about whether the letter was addressed to churches in the northern part of the region (the original Galatian territory) or to churches in the southern part of the newly constituted Roman province.

- **Paul's Concerns:**

In his letter, Paul addresses issues of false teaching and the importance of salvation by faith, rather than adherence to the Mosaic Law.

- **Hellenization:**

While the Galatians initially retained their Celtic culture, they gradually became Hellenized over time.

What is the history and significance of the churches in Galatia?

Answer

Galatia was a region in central Asia Minor, located in the highlands of Anatolia, now known as central Turkey. Paul and Barnabas passed through this area on the first missionary journey, establishing several churches there. Timothy was from the area of Derbe and Lystra in Galatia.

Galatia has a long history. In the third century BC, the area was invaded by Gallic Celts, and that is what gave the area its name: *Galatia* means "land of the Gauls." Rome conquered Galatia in 189 BC and made it a province in 25 BC. The name *Galatia* first appears in the New Testament in Acts 16:6 as a region where Paul had preached the gospel.

In the New Testament, Galatian believers are often grouped with those in neighboring provinces. Peter wrote "to God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" (1 Peter 1:1). Luke coupled Galatia with Phrygia in Acts 16:6 and 18:23.

When Paul addressed his letter to the Galatians, he wrote "to the churches in Galatia," rather than to a single church as he usually did with other letters (Galatians 1:1–2). Scholars believe that Galatians was most likely the first book of the New Testament to be written, around AD 49. Paul had founded this church and was concerned because the new Galatian believers were being influenced by the Judaizers, Jews who taught that salvation required keeping the Mosaic Law (specifically circumcision), as well as believing in Jesus (Galatians 2:14).

The Galatian churches were a mix of both Jew and Gentile converts, and the Judaizers worked to convince the Galatian churches that the Gentile believers must be circumcised before they could fellowship with the Jewish believers. Paul wrote to clarify what he had initially taught them, that salvation was by faith alone through the grace of God extended to anyone who believed (Ephesians 2:8–9).

Paul was dismayed at the way the Galatian believers were so easily influenced away from the truth of the gospel, and he was adamant that salvation is not dependent on human works: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel

of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!" (Galatians 1:6–9).

Later, on the second missionary journey, Paul again traveled through Galatia to revisit and encourage the churches in that region. As he and Silas visited each church, "they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey" (Acts 16:4), with the result that "the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers" (verse 5). It was during this time that Timothy began traveling with the missionaries (verses 1–3).

The book of Galatians, addressed to the churches of Galatia, is a master's thesis on salvation by grace alone, through faith (see Galatians 2:21). The theological crisis in the churches in Galatia was confronted head-on, and all the church benefits from Paul's exhortation to trust in Christ alone. Those today who try to add to the sufficiency of Christ's death and resurrection with their own works would benefit from a study of Galatians.

When was Galatians written:

The Apostle Paul likely wrote the letter to the Galatians around AD 48-50, possibly soon after establishing churches in the region of Galatia, to address issues of legalism and the importance of faith over works for salvation.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

- Authorship: The letter is attributed to the Apostle Paul.
- Date: Scholars generally agree that Galatians was written around AD 48-50.
- Destination: The letter was written to the churches in the region of Galatia, which was located in what is now modern-day Turkey.
- Purpose: The primary purpose of the letter was to address a theological crisis within the Galatian churches. Specifically, Paul was responding to false teachers who were advocating for adherence to Jewish law (legalism) as a requirement for salvation, rather than faith in Jesus Christ.

- Key Themes:
    - Justification by Faith: Paul emphasizes that salvation is received through faith in Jesus Christ, not through adherence to the Law.
    - Freedom in Christ: He highlights the freedom that believers have in Christ, free from the bondage of the law.
    - Paul's Apostolic Authority: Paul defends his authority as an apostle and his message as divinely inspired.
- Historical Context:
    - Paul had likely established churches in Galatia during his first missionary journey.
    - The Galatian churches were facing a theological crisis due to the influence of Judaizers (false teachers who insisted on Jewish law).
    - The letter was written to address this crisis and to reaffirm the core message of the Gospel.

Where is Galatia:

Galatia was an ancient region in the highlands of central Anatolia, roughly corresponding to modern-day central Turkey, particularly the provinces of Ankara and Eskişehir.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

- Location: Galatia was situated in north-central Anatolia, which is now part of modern-day Turkey.
- Historical Context: It was a region settled by Celtic Gauls in the 3rd century BCE.
- Roman Province: Galatia later became a Roman province, established by Augustus in 25 BCE.
- Capital: The capital of the Roman province of Galatia was Ancyra, which is modern-day Ankara.
- Boundaries: Galatia was bounded by Bithynia and Paphlagonia to the north, Pontus and Cappadocia to the east, Cilicia and Lycaonia to the south, and Phrygia to the west.

- Significance: The region is known for its historical connection to the Gauls and its role as a Roman province.

Insights about the Judaizers influencing the Galatians, and how this affected their understanding of the Gospel:

The “Judaizers”

Overview

The “Judaizers” seem to be a group of Jewish Christians in the first century CE who preached to the recently founded churches of the Gentiles the need to conform to the Law of Moses, even after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This group originated in Jerusalem; we know little about them, only that at least some are likely Pharisees (Acts 15:5). We do not know how organized they were or any names of any individuals within the movement. They are called the “Judaizers” for lack of a more official term; they attempted to make Jews out of Gentile Christians.

The importance of this group comes not from what they teach but by the reaction given to their teachings. The letters of Paul to the churches affected show that Christ has instituted a new covenant, and therefore the activities performed under the Law of Moses are made null and void. Let us now examine the history of this movement and the reaction to it.

Sections on this Page

- Jewish Christians in Jerusalem
- The Beginning: Antioch and the Conference in Jerusalem
- The “Judaizers” vs. Paul: Galatia
- The “Judaizers” vs. Paul: Corinth
- The “Judaizers” vs. Paul: Colossae
- Conclusion

Jewish Christians in Jerusalem

Before we begin to examine the impact of the “Judaizers” in the churches of Asia Minor and Greece, let us look at the church in Jerusalem.

The church in Jerusalem seems to consist of a large number of converts from Judaism, hereafter “Jewish Christians.” These Christians seemed to have

been very zealous for the traditions of their forefathers, as is evidenced by Acts 21:20:

And they, when they heard it, glorified God; and they said unto him, “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them that have believed; and they are all zealous for the Law.”

The significant thing about these former Jews is that they do not seem to be condemned for still holding to the Law of Moses. Luke tells the story in Acts 21:18-26:

And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles through his ministry. And they, when they heard it, glorified God; and they said unto him, “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them that have believed; and they are all zealous for the Law: and they have been informed concerning thee, that thou teachest all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? They will certainly hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men that have a vow on them; these take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges for them, that they may shave their heads: and all shall know that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the Law. But as touching the Gentiles that have believed, we wrote, giving judgment that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what is strangled, and from fornication.”
Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

We see here that Paul performs the actions according to the Law, even though he has preached vehemently against binding the Law of Moses. How can this be?

We must see that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were not yet condemned for holding to the Law of Moses because of the hardness of their hearts. For a period of time, God overlooked their ignorance, for the Jewish people were proud of their heritage, very zealous for their traditions (Romans 10:2), and bore great resentment towards the Gentiles. It was very difficult for these Jews, having heard the good news of Christ, to forsake the traditions handed

down from their forefathers. There is further evidence of this period in the letter to the Hebrews, Hebrews 8:13:

In that he saith, “A new covenant,” he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.

The first covenant had not yet fully disappeared, but was passing away.

Jesus had predicted these things and the end of this period in Matthew 24:3-41, the great destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. With the destruction of the Temple, the service of God as prescribed in the Law of Moses was rendered impossible, and by this it was understood that the last vestiges of the old covenant had finally faded away.

Therefore, when Paul went to Jerusalem in Acts 21, he understood the difference in covenants, although his Jewish brethren did not. He heeded his own words in 1 Corinthians 8 and 9 and performed the actions of service in the Temple to avoid causing strife in the church there.

What, then, is to be said about Paul’s conformity to the Law in Acts 21 but his insistence on the removal of the Law from the Galatians, Corinthians, Thessalonians, and Colossians? The answer lies in the audience. For those who were Jews and had converted to Christ, their conformity to the Law was for a time overlooked. For those who were Gentiles, however, who had neither heard the Law nor were ever under any compulsion to follow the Law, it had seemed good to the Holy Spirit and the Apostles not to burden them with the Law in Acts 15.

Therefore, the “Judaizers” seem to be those Christians from Jerusalem who wish to compel the Gentile converts to Christianity to follow the Law of Moses as they do.

The Beginning: Antioch and the Conference in Jerusalem

The first time the activities of the “Judaizers” are mentioned is in Acts 15:1:

And certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, “Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.”

Paul and Barnabas then debated these men concerning these things, and the brethren of Antioch determined that the best course of action was to have Paul and Barnabas travel to Jerusalem to inquire of the apostles and elders there concerning this issue. Paul and Barnabas went, and the meeting between them and the apostles and elders began.

It is at this time that we are informed that these “Judaizers” seem to be Pharisees, for Luke says that it is they who stood and declared that the Gentiles who had heard the message of Christ from Paul needed to be circumcised and to hold to the Law of Moses (Acts 15:5). There is then much discussion, but the end comes with the words of James, quoting the Old Testament prophets concerning the Gentiles, showing clearly that they are not to be bound according to the Law. The proclamation of the apostles and elders is seen in Acts 15:23-29:

and they wrote thus by them, “The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.”

We also learn in Paul’s letter to the Galatians that during his stay in Jerusalem, Paul discussed privately with James, Peter, and John, the nature of the Gospel which was being spread; Paul said they “contributed nothing” to the message which he preached, and that they saw that he was “entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised” (Galatians 2:1-8). The three extended to Paul “the right hand of fellowship,” demonstrating clearly that the gospel preached by Paul was valid and in accordance with the will of God (Galatians 2:9-10).

The “Judaizers” vs. Paul: Galatia

Despite the decree of the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem, the “Judaizers” continued to preach the need of the Gentiles to conform to the Law of Moses. Within a few years of the conference in Jerusalem, the “Judaizers” are seen actively in the areas of Asia Minor and Greece. We see this concern manifest in Paul’s letter to the Galatians, written to churches in south central Asia Minor around 55-57. In this letter, Paul first defends his apostleship and declares his authority (Galatians 1:11-2:10), demonstrating that the message he preaches comes from God. He then speaks of the

hypocrisy of Peter in Antioch, who first associated with the Gentile Christians but then became aloof when some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem came (Galatians 2:11-21). Paul then chides the Galatians, calling them “foolish” (Galatians 3:1), demonstrating very clearly that the original covenant made was made with Abraham looking toward Christ (Galatians 3:2-14). The Law of Moses was therefore designed to be a tutor, leading men to the knowledge of sin and death to be ready for the coming of the faith through Christ, in whom all men are now equal (Galatians 3:15-29). Finally, Paul makes a plain declaration to the Gentile Christians in Galatians 5:1-6:

For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed from Christ, ye would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace. For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.

It is abundantly clear: salvation comes through Christ and Christ alone. The Law of Moses can do nothing for the Christians in Galatia.

The “Judaizers” vs. Paul: Corinth

The “Judaizers” seem to enter Corinth in around 57, between the writing of the first and second Corinthian letters. They seem to have been accepted rather quickly, leveling charges against Paul: that he was not a true apostle, having no commendation from Jerusalem, as they did (2 Corinthians 3:1-2); that he was not a qualified speaker (2 Corinthians 10:10); and that since he did not take assistance from the Corinthian brethren, this was somehow a detriment to his validity as an Apostle (2 Corinthians 12:13).

Paul writes a very strong rebuttal to these charges. He establishes that his letters of commendation are the members of the church in Corinth, for whom Paul worked diligently (2 Corinthians 3:1-3). He then demonstrates how the Spirit is much more powerful than the Law written on tablets is (2 Corinthians 3:4-18). Later, he describes himself as meek when present, but bold through his letters (2 Corinthians 10:1-3), that he is the same person in present as in his letters (2 Corinthians 10:11-12), and is equal to many of the most eminent apostles in knowledge (2 Corinthians 11:5-6). He then says that he robbed from other churches to work with the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:7-

9), and says the following concerning a comparison of himself and these "Judaizers," in 2 Corinthians 11:22-28:

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches.

Paul speaks about the reaction of the Corinthians regarding his lack of receiving any assistance from the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 12:11-13:

I am become foolish: ye compelled me; for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works. For what is there wherein ye were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except it be that I myself was not a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong.

Finally, Paul asks the Corinthians if he or Titus had taken advantage of the Corinthians in any way or if their conduct was anything but befitting a servant of Christ (2 Corinthians 12:14-18). We have no information about any changes made in the church at Corinth because of Paul's exhortation, but we do see that no more rebuke or defense was necessary from him.

The "Judaizers" vs. Paul: Colossae

We cannot be sure if it is the same group of "Judaizers" who impacted the church in Colossae in Asia Minor around 60-61. This group seemed to focus on the festivals and the food proscriptions of the Law of Moses. Let us hear the words of Paul in Colossians 2:16-23:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's. Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things

which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increasing with the increase of God. If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, “Handle not, nor taste, nor touch,” (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

It appears that some had taught those in the church of Colossae to follow the commandments of Moses not to eat certain foods and to observe the Sabbath and other holy days. Paul says that no one has the right to judge on the basis of such things, for they are a shadow of what is to come and not the truth in Christ.

Conclusion

The last impact of the “Judaizers” can be seen in Ephesus, with those who “pay attention to…endless genealogies” in 1 Timothy 1:4, but we cannot know if this was due to an external force (such as the “Judaizers”) or some strange idea brought forth within the church in Ephesus itself. Regardless, the “Judaizers” seem to be in decline by the time of Paul’s death in 64, and after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70, with the Temple and many of the other vestiges of the Law of Moses destroyed, the movement loses most of its impetus. There are later indications of “Ebionite”, or “Hebrew”, Christians, but these groups are small and few, and do not pose much of a concern.

We can learn much from the impact of the “Judaizers” on the churches of the Gentile world, specifically, the changes between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ. It is made evident by Paul in his letters that the Old Covenant is to be done away with, that it can do no good for us under the mediation of the man Christ Jesus. There is no better way to describe this change than to read the words of Paul concerning Christ in Colossians 2:13-14:

And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross.

Cultural terms or places mentioned in Galatians:

Historical-Cultural Facts Related to the Study of Galatians

1. **Galatia's Location**: Galatia was a region in the central part of what is now modern-day Turkey. It was named after the Gauls, a Celtic people who migrated there in the 3rd century BC.
2. **Roman Rule**: During the time of Paul's letter to the Galatians, the region was under Roman rule. It was part of the Roman province of Asia.
3. **Cultural Diversity**: Galatia was a culturally diverse region, with a mix of Greek, Roman, and Celtic influences. This diversity is reflected in the issues addressed in the letter to the Galatians.
4. **Religious Practices**: The Galatians were known for their syncretistic religious practices, combining elements of Greek, Roman, and Celtic religions.
5. **Paul's Missionary Journey**: The letter to the Galatians was written by Paul, who had visited the region during his first missionary journey. His experiences in Galatia had a significant impact on his theology and ministry.
6. **Judaizers**: The letter addresses the issue of Judaizers, Jewish Christians who insisted that Gentile converts to Christianity must also follow Jewish law. This was a major controversy in the early church.
7. **Paul's Authority**: In the letter, Paul defends his authority as an apostle, which was being questioned by some in the Galatian church.
8. **The Law and the Gospel**: The letter to the Galatians is a key text for understanding Paul's views on the relationship between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
9. **Galatians and the Reformation**: The letter to the Galatians played a significant role in the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther, in particular, saw in Galatians a clear articulation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone.
10. **Galatians in Modern Scholarship**: Modern biblical scholars continue to debate many aspects of the letter to the Galatians, including its date, the identity of the "Galatians" to whom it was written, and the nature of the "works of the law" that Paul criticizes.

These facts provide a historical and cultural context for understanding the letter to the Galatians and its significance in the New Testament.

God’s characteristics in Galatians 5

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul outlines the "fruit of the Spirit" as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, highlighting the characteristics of a life led by the Holy Spirit, contrasting with the "deeds of the flesh".

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23):

- Love:

This is a deep, selfless, and enduring affection, not just an emotion but a way of acting towards others, even enemies.

- Joy:

A deep sense of inner peace and happiness, even in difficult circumstances, stemming from a relationship with God.

- Peace:

A state of tranquility and harmony, both inwardly and in relationships, reflecting God's presence and control.

- Patience:

The ability to endure difficulties and setbacks with a calm and forgiving spirit, trusting in God's timing.

- Kindness:

A genuine concern for others, expressed through acts of compassion and helpfulness, reflecting God's character.

- Goodness:

Uprightness of heart and life, characterized by righteousness and a desire to do what is right and beneficial.

- Faithfulness:

Trustworthiness and loyalty, both to God and to others, demonstrating a commitment to one's word and promises.

- Gentleness:

A mild and unassuming demeanor, characterized by humility and a willingness to yield to others.

- Self-control:

The ability to restrain impulses and desires, exercising discipline and wisdom in one's thoughts, words, and actions.

Contrasting with the Deeds of the Flesh (Galatians 5:19-21):

- Sexual immorality, impurity, and indecency: Actions that violate God's standards of purity and holiness.
- Idolatry, witchcraft, hostility, strife, jealousy, anger, selfish ambition, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, and carousing: Actions that reflect a lack of spiritual maturity and a focus on self-gratification rather than God's will.

Matthew Henry Commentary: Search “Galatians 5:16-26” for how the passage speaks to God’s nature (Spirit vs. flesh).

In his commentary, Matthew Henry emphasizes the contrast between living "after the flesh" and living "after the Spirit," highlighting that the flesh is a source of sin and death, while the Spirit leads to life and pleasing God. He stresses that true Christian living involves mortifying the deeds of the body through the power of the Spirit.

Here's a more detailed breakdown of Matthew Henry's perspective on the Spirit vs. flesh:

1. The Flesh as a Source of Sin and Death:

- Corrupt Nature:

Henry views the flesh as representing a corrupt, sinful nature that inclines individuals towards evil.

- Works of the Flesh:

He identifies various actions and desires stemming from the flesh as "works of the flesh," which are detrimental to spiritual well-being.

- Death and Alienation:

He emphasizes that living "after the flesh" leads to spiritual death and alienation from God.

- Carnal Mind:

Henry uses the term "carnal mind" to describe the mindset that is focused on earthly desires and opposed to God's will.

2. The Spirit as a Source of Life and Grace:

- Fruit of the Spirit:

He highlights that grace and spiritual growth are the "fruit of the Spirit," emphasizing that they are not the result of human effort but are a gift from God.

- Walking in the Spirit:

Henry encourages Christians to "walk in the Spirit" rather than "after the flesh," meaning to live according to the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

- Mortification of the Flesh:

He emphasizes the importance of "mortifying the deeds of the body" through the power of the Spirit, meaning to subdue and overcome the desires of the flesh.

- Pleasing God:

Living "after the Spirit" is essential for pleasing God and experiencing true spiritual life.

3. The Importance of Spiritual Warfare:

- Conflict with the Flesh:

Henry acknowledges the ongoing struggle between the flesh and the Spirit within believers, emphasizing the need for vigilance and reliance on God's power.

- Spiritual Armor:

He encourages Christians to equip themselves with spiritual armor, such as faith, prayer, and the Word of God, to resist the temptations and attacks of the flesh.

- Reliance on God's Grace:

He stresses the need for reliance on God's grace and the power of the Spirit to overcome the flesh and live a life pleasing to God.

The apostle, having fully explained the doctrine of justification, and pressed the necessity of sanctification, in this chapter applies himself to the consolation of the Lord's people. Ministers are helpers of the joy of the saints. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," so runs our commission, Isa. 40:1. It is the will of God that his people should be a comforted people. And we have here such a draught of the gospel charter, such a display of the unspeakable privileges of true believers, as may furnish us with abundant matter for joy and peace in believing, that by all these immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation. Many of the people of God have, accordingly, found this chapter a well-spring of comfort to their souls, living and dying, and have sucked and been satisfied from these breasts of consolation, and with joy drawn water out of these wells of salvation. There are three things in this chapter: I. The particular instances of Christians' privileges (v. 1-28). II. The ground thereof laid in predestination (v. 29, 30). III. The apostle's triumph herein, in the name of all the saints (v. 31 to the end).

Verses 1-9

I. The apostle here beings with one signal privilege of true Christians, and describes the character of those to whom it belongs: *There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus,* v. 1. This is his triumph after that melancholy complaint and conflict in the foregoing chapter-sin remaining, disturbing, vexing, but, blessed be God, not ruining. The complaint he takes to himself, but humbly transfers the comfort with himself to all true believers, who are all interested in it. 1. It is the unspeakable privilege and comfort of all those that are in Christ Jesus that there is therefore now no condemnation to them. He does not say, "There is no accusation against them," for this there is; but the accusation is thrown out, and the indictment quashed. He does not say, "There is nothing in them that deserves condemnation," for this there is, and they see it, and own it, and mourn over it, and condemn themselves for it; but it shall not be their ruin. He does not say, "There is no cross, no affliction to them or no displeasure in the affliction," for this there may be; but *no condemnation.* They may be

chastened of the Lord, but not condemned with the world. Now this arises from their being in Christ Jesus; by virtue of their union with him through faith they are thus secured. They are in Christ Jesus, as in their city of refuge, and so are protected from the avenger of blood. He is their advocate, and brings them off. There is therefore no condemnation, because they are interested in the satisfaction that Christ by dying made to the law. In Christ, God does not only not condemn them, but is well pleased with them, Mt. 17:5. 2. It is the undoubted character of all those who are so in Christ Jesus as to be freed from condemnation that *they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.* Observe, The character is given from their walk, not from any one particular act, but from their course and way. And the great question is, What is the principle of the walk, the flesh or the spirit, the old or the new nature, corruption or grace? Which of these do we mind, for which of these doe we make provision, by which of these are we governed, which of these do we take part with?

II. This great truth, thus laid down, he illustrates in the following verses; and shows how we come by this great privilege, and how we may answer this character.

1. How we come by these privileges-the privilege of justification, that *there is no condemnation to us*—the privilege of sanctification, that *we walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh,* which is no less our privilege than it is our duty. How comes it about?

(1.) The law could not do it, v. 3. It could neither justify nor sanctify, neither free us from the guilt nor from the power of sin, having not the promises either of pardon or grace. The law made nothing perfect: *It was weak.* Some attempt the law made towards these blessed ends, but, alas! it was weak, it could not accomplish them: yet that weakness was not through any defect in the law, but *through the flesh,* through the corruption of human nature, by which we became incapable either of being justified or sanctified by the law. We had become unable to keep the law, and, in case of failure, the law, as a covenant of works, made no provision, and so left us as it found us. Or understand it of the ceremonial law; that was a plaster not wide enough for the wound, it could never take away sin, Heb. 10:4.

(2.) *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* does it, v. 2. The covenant of grace made with us in Christ is a treasury of merit and grace, and thence we receive pardon and a new nature, *are freed from the law of sin and*

death, that is, both from the guilt and power of sin-from the course of the law, and the dominion of the flesh. We are under another covenant, another master, another husband, under the *law of the Spirit,* the law that gives the Spirit, spiritual life to qualify us for eternal. The foundation of this freedom is laid in Christ's undertaking for us, of which he speaks v. 3, *God sending his own Son.* Observe, When the law failed, God provided another method. Christ comes to do that which the law could not do. Moses brought the children of Israel to the borders of Canaan, and then died, and left them there; but Joshua did that which Moses could not do, and put them in possession of Canaan. Thus what the law could not do Christ did. The best exposition of this verse we have Heb. 10:1-10. To make the sense of the words clear, which in our translation is a little intricate, we may read it thus, with a little transposition:—*God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,* etc., v. 4. Observe, [1.] How Christ appeared: *In the likeness of sinful flesh.* Not sinful, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled; but in the likeness of that flesh which was sinful. He took upon him that nature which was corrupt, though perfectly abstracted from the corruptions of it. His being circumcised, redeemed, baptized with John's baptism, bespeaks the likeness of sinful flesh. The bitings of the fiery serpents were cured by a serpent of brass, which had the shape, through free from the venom, of the serpents that bit them. It was great condescension that he who was God should be made in the likeness of flesh; but much greater that he who was holy should be made in the likeness of sinful flesh. *And for sin,*—here the best Greek copies place the comma. God sent him, *en homoioμmati sarkos hamartias, kai peri hamartias—in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as a sacrifice for sin.* The Septuagint call a sacrifice for sin no more than *peri hamartias—for sin;* so Christ was a sacrifice; he was sent to be so, Heb. 9:26. [2.] What was done by this appearance of his: Sin *was condemned,* that is, God did therein more than ever manifest his hatred of sin; and not only so, but for all that are Christ's both the damning and the domineering power of sin is broken and taken out of the way. He that is condemned can neither accuse nor rule; his testimony is null, and his authority null. Thus by Christ is sin condemned; though it live and remain, its life in the saints is still but like that of a condemned malefactor. it was by the condemning of sin that death was disarmed, and the devil, who had the power of death, destroyed. The condemning of sin saved the sinner from condemnation. Christ was made sin for us (2 Co. 5:21), and, being so made, when he was condemned sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ, condemned in the human nature: So was sanctification made

to divine justice, and way made for the salvation of the sinner. [3.] The happy effect of this upon us (v. 4): *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.* Both in our justification and in our sanctification, the righteousness of the law if fulfilled. A righteousness of satisfaction for the breach of the law is fulfilled by the imputation of Christ's complete and perfect righteousness, which answers the utmost demands of the law, as the mercy-seat was as long and as broad as the ark. A righteousness of obedience to the commands of the law is fulfilled in us, when by the Spirit the law of love is written upon the heart, and that love is the fulfilling of the law, ch. 13:10. Though the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled by us, yet, blessed be God, it is fulfilled in us; there is that to be found upon and in all true believers which answers the intention of the law. *Us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* This is the description of all those that are interested in this privilege-they act from spiritual and not from carnal principles; as for others, the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled upon them in their ruin. Now,

2. Observe how we may answer to this character, v. 5, etc.

(1.) By looking to our minds. How may we know whether we are after the flesh or after the Spirit? By examining what we mind, the things of the flesh or the things of the spirit. Carnal pleasure, worldly profit and honour, the things of sense and time, are the things of the flesh, which unregenerate people mind. The favour of God, the welfare of the soul, the concerns of eternity, are the things of the Spirit, which those that are after the Spirit do mind. The man is as the mind is. The mind is the forge of thoughts. *As he thinketh in his heart, so is he,* Prov. 23:7. Which way do the thoughts move with most pleasure? On what do they dwell with most satisfaction? The mind is the seat of wisdom. Which way go the projects and contrivances? whether are we more wise for the world or for our souls? *phronousi ta teμs sarkos—they savour the things of the flesh;* so the word is rendered, Mt. 16:23. It is a great matter what our savour is, what truths, what tidings, what comforts, we do most relish, and are most agreeable to us. Now, to caution us against this carnal-mindedness, he shows the great misery and malignity of it, and compares it with the unspeakable excellency and comfort of spiritual-mindedness. [1.] It is death, v. 6. It is spiritual death, the certain way to eternal death. It is the death of the soul; for it is its alienation from God, in union and communion with whom the life of the soul consists. A carnal soul is a dead soul, dead as a soul can die. She that *liveth in pleasure is dead* (1 Tim. 5:6), not only dead in law as guilty, but dead in state as carnal. Death

includes all misery; carnal souls are miserable souls. But to be *spiritually minded, phroneμma tou pneumatos—a spiritual savour* (the wisdom that is from above, a principle of grace) is *life and peace;* it is the felicity and happiness of the soul. The life of the soul consists in its union with spiritual things by the mind. A sanctified soul is a living soul, and that life is peace; it is a very comfortable life. All the paths of spiritual wisdom are paths of peace. It is life and peace in the other world, as well as in this. Spiritual-mindedness is eternal life and peace begun, and an assuring earnest of the perfection of it. [2.] It is enmity to God (v. 7), and this is worse than the former. The former speaks the carnal sinner a dead man, which is bad; but this speaks him a devil of a man. It is not only an enemy, but enmity itself. It is not only the alienation of the soul from God, but the opposition of the soul against God; it rebels against his authority, thwarts his design, opposes his interest, spits in his face, spurns at his bowels. Can there be a greater enmity? An enemy may be reconciled, but enmity cannot. How should this humble us for and warn us against, carnal-mindedness! Shall we harbour and indulge that which is enmity to God our creator, owner, ruler, and benefactor? To prove this, he urges that *it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* The holiness of the law of God, and the unholiness of the carnal mind, are as irreconcilable as light and darkness. The carnal man may, by the power of divine grace, be made subject to the law of God, but the *carnal mind* never can; this must be broken and expelled. See how wretchedly the corrupt will of man is enslaved to sin; as far as the carnal mind prevails, there is no inclination to the law of God; therefore wherever there is a change wrought it is by the power of God's grace, not by the freedom of man's will. Hence he infers (v. 8), *Those that are in the flesh cannot please God.* Those that are in a carnal unregenerate state, under the reigning power of sin, cannot do the things that please God, wanting grace, the pleasing principle, and an interest in Christ, the pleasing Mediator. The very *sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination,* Prov. 15:8. Pleasing God is our highest end, of which those that are in the flesh cannot but fall short; they cannot please him, nay, they cannot but displease him. We may know our state and character,

(2.) By enquiring whether we have the Spirit of God and Christ, or not (v. 9): *You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.* This expresses states and conditions of the soul vastly different. All the saints have flesh and spirit in them; but to be in the flesh and to be in the Spirit are contrary. It denotes our being overcome and subdued by one of these principles. As we say, A man is *in love,* or *in drink,* that is, overcome by it. Now the great question is

whether we are in the flesh or in the Spirit; and how may we come to know it? Why, by enquiring whether the Spirit of God dwell in us. The Spirit dwelling in us is the best evidence of our being in the Spirit, for the indwelling is mutual (1 Jn. 4:16): *Dwelleth in God, and God in him.* The Spirit visits many that are unregenerate with his motions, which they resist and quench; but in all that are sanctified he dwells; there he resides and rules. He is there as a man at his own house, where he is constant and welcome, and has the dominion. Shall we put this question to our own hearts, Who dwells, who rules, who keeps house, here? Which interest has the ascendant? To this he subjoins a general rule of trial: *If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* To be Christ's (that is, to be a Christian indeed, one of his children, his servants, his friends, in union with him) is a privilege and honour which many pretend to that have no part nor lot in the matter. None are his but those that have his Spirit; that is, [1.] That are spirited as he was spirited-are meek, and lowly, and humble, and peaceable, and patient, and charitable, as he was. We cannot tread in his steps unless we have his spirit; the frame and disposition of our souls must be conformable to Christ's pattern. [2.] That are actuated and guided by the Holy Spirit of God, as a sanctifier, teacher, and comforter. Having the Spirit of Christ is the same with having the Spirit of God to dwell in us. But those two come much to one; for all that are actuated by the Spirit of God as their rule are conformable to the spirit of Christ as their pattern. Now this description of the character of those to whom belongs this first privilege of freedom from condemnation is to be applied to all the other privileges that follow.

Verses 10-16

In these verses the apostle represents two more excellent benefits, which belong to true believers.

I. Life. The happiness is not barely a negative happiness, not to be condemned; but it is positive, it is an advancement to a life that will be the unspeakable happiness of the man (v. 10, 11): *If Christ be in you.* Observe, If the Spirit be in us, Christ is in us. He dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. 3:17. Now we are here told what becomes of the bodies and souls of those in whom Christ is.

1. We cannot say but that *the body is dead;* it is a frail, mortal, dying body, and it will be dead shortly; it is a house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust. The life purchased and promised does not immortalize the body in its

present state. It is dead, that is, it is appointed to die, it is under a sentence of death: as we say one that is condemned is a dead man. In the midst of life we are in death: be our bodies ever so strong, and healthful, and handsome, they are as good as dead (Heb. 11:12), and this *because of sin.* It is sin that kills the body. This effect the first threatening has (Gen. 3:19): *Dust thou art.* Methinks, were there no other argument, love to our bodies should make us hate sin, because it is such an enemy to our bodies. The death even of the bodies of the saints is a remaining token of God's displeasure against sin.

2. But the spirit, the precious soul, that is life; it is now spiritually alive, nay, it is life. Grace in the soul is its new nature; the life of the saint lies in the soul, while the life of the sinner goes no further than the body. When the body dies, and returns to the dust, *the spirit if life;* not only living and immortal, but swallowed up of life. Death to the saints is but the freeing of the heaven-born spirit from the clog and load of this body, that it may be fit to partake of eternal life. When Abraham was dead, yet God was the God of Abraham, for even then his spirit was life, Mt. 22:31, 32. See Ps. 49:15. And this *because of righteousness.* The righteousness of Christ imputed to them secures the soul, the better part, from death; the righteousness of Christ inherent in them, the renewed image of God upon the soul, preserves it, and, by God's ordination, at death elevates it, and improves it, and makes it meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. The eternal life of the soul consists in the vision and fruition of God, and both assimilating, for which the soul is qualified by the righteousness of sanctification. I refer to Ps. 17:15, *I will behold thy face in righteousness.*

3. There is a life reserved too for the poor body at last: *He shall also quicken your mortal bodies,* v. 11. The Lord is for the body; and though at death it is cast aside as a despised broken vessel, a vessel in which is no pleasure, yet God will have a desire to the work of his hands (Job 14:15), will remember his covenant with the dust, and will not lose a grain of it; but the body shall be reunited to the soul, and clothed with a glory agreeable to it. Vile bodies shall be newly fashioned, Phil. 3:21; 1 Co. 15:42. Two great assurances of the resurrection of the body are mentioned:—(1.) The resurrection of Christ: He *that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken.* Christ rose as the head, and first-fruits, and forerunner of all the saints, 1 Co. 15:20. The body of Christ lay in the grave, under the sin of all the elect imputed, and broke through it. O grave, then, where is thy victory? It is in the virtue of Christ's resurrection that we shall rise. (2.) The indwelling of the Spirit. The same Spirit that raiseth the soul now will raise the body shortly: *By his Spirit that*

dwelleth in you. The bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Co. 3:16; 6:19. Now, though these temples may be suffered for awhile to lie in ruins, yet they shall be rebuilt. The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, shall be repaired, whatever great mountains may be in the way. The Spirit, breathing upon dead and dry bones, will make them live, and the saints even in their flesh shall see God. Hence the apostle by the way infers how much it is our duty to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, v. 12, 13. Let not our life be after the wills and motions of the flesh. Two motives he mentions here:—[1.] We are not debtors to the flesh, neither by relation, gratitude, nor any other bond or obligation. We owe no suit nor service to our carnal desires; we are indeed bound to clothe, and feed, and take care of the body, as a servant to the soul in the service of God, but no further. We are not debtors to it; the flesh never did us so much kindness as to oblige us to serve it. It is implied that we are debtors to Christ and to the Spirit: there we owe our all, all we have and all we can do, by a thousand bonds and obligations. Being delivered from so great a death by so great a ransom, we are deeply indebted to our deliverer. See 1 Co. 6:19, 20. [2.] Consider the consequences, what will be at the end of the way. Here are life and death, blessing and cursing, set before us. *If you live after the flesh, you shall die;* that is, die eternally. It is the pleasing, and serving, and gratifying, of the flesh, that are the ruin of souls; that is, the second death. Dying indeed is the soul's dying: the death of the saints is but a sleep. But, on the other hand, *You shall live,* live and be happy to eternity; that is the true life: *If you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body,* subdue and keep under all fleshly lusts and affections, deny yourselves in the pleasing and humouring of the body, and this through the Spirit; we cannot do it without the Spirit working it in us, and the Spirit will not do it without our doing our endeavour. So that in a word we are put upon this dilemma, either to displease the body or destroy the soul.

II. The *Spirit of adoption* is another privilege belonging to those that are in Christ Jesus, v. 14-16.

1. All that are Christ's are taken into the relation of Children to God, v. 14. Observe, (1.) Their property: They are *led by the Spirit of God,* as a scholar in his learning is led by his tutor, as a traveller in his journey is led by his guide, as a soldier in his engagements is led by his captain; not driven as beasts, but led as rational creatures, drawn with the cords of a man and the bands of love. It is the undoubted character of all true believers that they are led by the Spirit of God. Having submitted themselves in believing to his guidance,

they do in their obedience follow that guidance, and are sweetly led into all truth and all duty. (2.) Their privilege: *They are the sons of God,* received into the number of God's children by adoption, owned and loved by him as his children.

2. And those that are the sons of God have the Spirit,

(1.) To work in them the disposition of children.

[1.] *You have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear,* v. 15. Understand it, *First,* Of that spirit of bondage which the Old-Testament church was under, by reason of the darkness and terror of that dispensation. The veil signified bondage, 2 Co. 3:15. Compare v. 17. The Spirit of adoption was not then so plentifully poured out as now; for the law opened the wound, but little of the remedy. Now you are not under that dispensation, you have not received that spirit. *Secondly,* Of that spirit of bondage which many of the saints themselves were under at their conversion, under the convictions of sin and wrath set home by the Spirit; as those in Acts 2:37, the jailer (Acts 16:30), Paul, Acts 9:6. Then the Spirit himself was to the saints a spirit of bondage: "But," says the apostle, "with you this is over." "God as a Judge," says Dr. Manton, "by the spirit of bondage, sends us to Christ as Mediator, and Christ as Mediator, by the spirit of adoption, sends us back again to God as a Father." Though a child of God may come under fear of bondage again, and may be questioning his sonship, yet the blessed Spirit is not again a spirit of bondage, for then he would witness an untruth.

[2.] But you *have received the Spirit of adoption.* Men may give a charter of adoption; but it is God's prerogative, when he adopts, to give a spirit of adoption-the nature of children. The Spirit of adoption works in the children of God a filial love to God as a Father, a delight in him, and a dependence upon him, as a Father. A sanctified soul bears the image of God, as the child bears the image of the father. *Whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* Praying is here called *crying,* which is not only an earnest, but a natural expression of desire; children that cannot speak vent their desires by crying. Now, the Spirit teaches us in prayer to come to God as a Father, with a holy humble confidence, emboldening the soul in that duty. *Abba, Father. Abba* is a Syriac word signifying *father* or *my father; pateμr,* a Greek work; and why both, *Abba, Father?* Because Christ said so in prayer (Mk. 14:36), *Abba, Father:* and we have received the Spirit of the Son. It denotes an affectionate endearing importunity, and a believing stress laid upon the relation. Little

children, begging of their parents, can say little but *Father, Father,* and that is rhetoric enough. It also denotes that the adoption is common both to Jews and Gentiles: the Jews call him *Abba* in their language, the Greeks may call him *pateµr* in their language; for in Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew.

(2.) To witness to the relation of children, v. 16. The former is the work of the Spirit as a Sanctifier; this as a Comforter. *Beareth witness with our spirit.* Many a man has the witness of his own spirit to the goodness of his state who has not the concurring testimony of the Spirit. Many speak peace to themselves to whom the God of heaven does not speak peace. But those that are sanctified have God's Spirit witnessing with their spirits, which is to be understood not of any immediate extraordinary revelation, but an ordinary work of the Spirit, in and by the means of comfort, speaking peace to the soul. This testimony is always agreeable to the written word, and is therefore always grounded upon sanctification; for the Spirit in the heart cannot contradict the Spirit in the word. The Spirit witnesses to none the privileges of children who have not the nature and disposition of children.

Verses 17-25

In these words the apostle describes a fourth illustrious branch of the happiness of believers, namely, a title to the future glory. This is fitly annexed to our sonship; for as the adoption of sons entitles us to that glory, so the disposition of sons fits and prepares us for it. *If children, then heirs,* v. 17. In earthly inheritances this rule does not hold, only the first-born are heirs; but the church is a church of first-born, for they are all heirs. Heaven is an inheritance that all the saints are heirs to. They do not come to it as purchasers by any merit or procurement of their own; but as heirs, purely by the act of God; for God makes heirs. The saints are heirs though in this world they are heirs under age; see Gal. 4:1, 2. Their present state is a state of education and preparation for the inheritance. How comfortable should this be to all the children of God, how little soever they have in possession, that, being heirs, they have enough in reversion! But the honour and happiness of an heir lie in the value and worth of that which he is heir to: we read of those that inherit the wind; and therefore we have here an abstract of the premises. 1. *Heirs of God.* The Lord himself is the portion of the saints' inheritance (Ps. 16:5), a goodly heritage, v. 6. The saints are spiritual priests, that have the Lord for their inheritance, Num. 18:20. The vision of God and the fruition of God make up the inheritance the saints are heirs to. God

himself will be with them, and will be their God, Rev. 21:3. 2. *Joint-heirs with Christ.* Christ, as Mediator, is said to be the heir of all things (Heb. 1:2), and true believers, by virtue of their union with him, *shall inherit all things,* Rev. 21:7. Those that now partake of the Spirit of Christ, as his brethren, shall, as his brethren, partake of his glory (Jn. 17:24), shall sit down with him upon his throne, Rev. 3:21. Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst thus magnify him! Now this future glory is further spoken of as the reward of present sufferings and as the accomplishment of present hopes.

I. As the reward of the saints' present sufferings; and it is a rich reward: *If so be that we suffer with him* (v. 17), or *forasmuch as we suffer with him.* The state of the church in this world always is, but was then especially, an afflicted state; to be a Christian was certainly to be a sufferer. Now, to comfort them in reference to those sufferings, he tells them that they suffered with Christ-for his sake, for his honour, and for the testimony of a good conscience, and should be glorified with him. Those that suffered with David in his persecuted state were advanced by him and with him when he came to the crown; see 2 Tim. 2:12. See the gains of suffering for Christ; though we may be losers for him, we shall not, we cannot, be losers by him in the end. This the gospel is filled with the assurances of. Now, that suffering saints may have strong supports and consolations from their hopes of heaven, he holds the balance (v. 18), in a comparison between the two, which is observable. 1. In one scale he puts the *sufferings of this present time.* The sufferings of the saints are but sufferings of this present time, strike no deeper than the things of time, last no longer than the present time (2 Co. 4:17), light affliction, and but for a moment. So that on the sufferings he writes *tekel,* weighed in the balance and found light. 2. In the other scale he puts the glory, and finds that a weight, an exceeding and eternal weight: *Glory that shall be revealed.* In our present state we come short, not only in the enjoyment, but in the knowledge of that glory (1 Co. 2:9; 1 Jn. 3:2): it shall be revealed. It surpasses all that we have yet seen and known: present vouchsafements are sweet and precious, very precious, very sweet; but there is something to come, something behind the curtain, that will outshine all. *Shall be revealed in us;* not only revealed to us, to be seen, but revealed in us, to be enjoyed. The kingdom of God is within you, and will be so to eternity. 3. He concludes the sufferings *not worthy to be compared with the glory—ouk axia pros teμn doxan.* They cannot merit that glory; and, if suffering for Christ will not merit, much less will doing. They should not at all deter and frighten us from the diligent and earnest pursuit of that glory. The sufferings are small and short, and concern the body only; but the glory is

rich and great, and concerns the soul, and is eternal. This he reckons. *I reckon—logizomai.* It is not a rash and sudden determination, but the product of a very serious and deliberate consideration. he had reasoned the case within himself, weighed the arguments on both sides, and thus at last resolves the point. O how vastly different is the sentence of the word from the sentiment of the world concerning the sufferings of this present time! *I reckon,* as an arithmetician that is balancing an account. He first sums up what is disbursed for Christ in the sufferings of this present time, and finds they come to very little; he then sums up what is secured to us by Christ in the glory that shall be revealed, and this he finds to be an infinite sum, transcending all conception, the disbursement abundantly made up and the losses infinitely countervailed. And who would be afraid then to suffer for Christ, who as he is before-hand with us in suffering, so he will not be behind-hand with us in recompence? Now Paul was as competent a judge of this point as ever any mere man was. He could reckon not by art only, but by experience; for he knew both. He knew what the sufferings of this present time were; see 2 Co. 11:23-28. He knew what the glory of heaven is; see 2 Co. 12:3, 4. And, upon the view of both, he gives this judgment here. There is nothing like a believing view of the glory which shall be revealed to support and bear up the spirit under all the sufferings of this present time. The reproach of Christ appears riches to those who have respect to the recompence of reward, Heb. 11:26.

II. As the accomplishment of the saints' present hopes and expectations, v. 19, etc. As the saints are suffering for it, so they are waiting for it. Heaven is therefore sure; for God by his Spirit would not raise and encourage those hopes only to defeat and disappoint them. He will establish that word unto his servants on which he has caused them to hope (Ps. 119:49), and heaven is therefore sweet; for, if hope deferred makes the heart sick, surely when the desire comes it will be a tree of life, Prov. 13:12. Now he observes an expectation of this glory,

1. In the creatures v. 19-22. That must needs be a great, a transcendent glory, which all the creatures are so earnestly expecting and longing for. This observation in these verses has some difficulty in it, which puzzles interpreters a little; and the more because it is a remark not made in any other scripture, with which it might be compared. By the *creature* here we understand, not as some do the Gentile world, and their expectation of Christ and the gospel, which is an exposition very foreign and forced, but the whole frame of nature, especially that of this lower world—the whole creation, the

compages of inanimate and sensible creatures, which, because of their harmony and mutual dependence, and because they all constitute and make up one world, are spoken of in the singular number as the *creature.* The sense of the apostle in these four verses we may take in the following observations:—(1.) That there is a present vanity to which the creature, by reason of the sin of man, is made subject, v. 20. When man sinned, the ground was cursed for man's sake, and with it all the creatures (especially of this lower world, where our acquaintance lies) became subject to that curse, became mutable and mortal. *Under the bondage of corruption,* v. 21. There is an impurity, deformity, and infirmity, which the creature has contracted by the fall of man: the creation is sullied and stained, much of the beauty of the world gone. There is an enmity of one creature to another; they are all subject to continual alteration and decay of the individuals, liable to the strokes of God's judgments upon man. When the world was drowned, and almost all the creatures in it, surely then it was subject to vanity indeed. The whole species of creatures is designed for, and is hastening to, a total dissolution by fire. And it is not the least part of their vanity and bondage that they are used, or abused rather, by men as instruments of sin. The creatures are often abused to the dishonour of their Creator, the hurt of his children, or the service of his enemies. When the creatures are made the food and fuel of our lusts, they are subject to vanity, they are captivated by the law of sin. And this *not willingly,* not of their own choice. All the creatures desire their own perfection and consummation; when they are made instruments of sin it is not willingly. Or, They are thus captivated, not for any sin of their own, which they had committed, but for man's sin: *By reason of him who hath subjected the same.* Adam did it meritoriously; the creatures being delivered to him, when he by sin delivered himself he delivered them likewise into the bondage of corruption. God did it judicially; he passed a sentence upon the creatures for the sin of man, by which they became subject. And this yoke (poor creatures) they bear in hope that it will not be so always. *EpÕ elpidi hoti kai,* etc.—*in hope that the creature itself;* so many Greek copies join the words. We have reason to pity the poor creatures that for our sin have become subject to vanity. (2.) That the creatures *groan and travail in pain* together under this vanity and corruption, v. 22. It is a figurative expression. Sin is a burden to the whole creation; the sin of the Jews, in crucifying Christ, set the earth a quaking under them. The idols were a burden to the weary beast, Isa. 46:1. There is a general outcry of the whole creation against the sin of man: the stone crieth out of the wall (Hab. 2:11), the land cries, Job 31:38. (3.) That the creature, that is now thus burdened, shall, at the time of the restitution of all things, be *delivered from this*

bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God (v. 21)—they shall no more be subject to vanity and corruption, and the other fruits of the curse; but, on the contrary, this lower world shall be renewed: when there will be new heavens there will be a new earth (2 Pt. 3:13; Rev. 21:1); and there shall be a glory conferred upon all the creatures, which shall be (in the proportion of their natures) as suitable and as great an advancement as the glory of the children of God shall be to them. The fire at the last day shall be a refining, not a destroying annihilating fire. What becomes of the souls of brutes, that go downwards, none can tell. But it should seem by the scripture that there will be some kind of restoration of them. And if it be objected, What use will they be of to glorified saints? we may suppose them of as much use as they were to Adam in innocency; and if it be only to illustrate the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator, that is enough. Compare with this Ps. 96:10-13; 98:7-9. *Let the heavens rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh.* (4.) That the creature doth therefore earnestly expect and wait for the *manifestation of the children of God,* v. 19. Observe, At the second coming of Christ there will be a manifestation of the children of God. Now the saints are God's hidden ones, the wheat seems lost in a heap of chaff; but then they shall be manifested. It does not yet appear what we shall be (1 Jn. 3:2), but then the glory shall be revealed. The children of God shall appear in their own colours. And this redemption of the creature is reserved till then; for, as it was with man and for man that they fell under the curse, so with man and for man they shall be delivered. All the curse and filth that now adhere to the creature shall be done away then when those that have suffered with Christ upon earth shall reign with him upon the earth. This the whole creation looks and longs for; and it may serve as a reason why now a good man should be merciful to his beast.

2. In the saints, who are new creatures, v. 23-25. Observe, (1.) The grounds of this expectation in the saints. It is our having received *the first-fruits of the Spirit,* which both quickens our desires and encourages our hopes, and both ways raises our expectations. The first-fruits did both sanctify and ensure the lump. Grace is the first-fruits of glory, it is glory begun. We, having received such clusters in this wilderness, cannot but long for the full vintage in the heavenly Canaan. *Not only they*—not only the creatures which are not capable of such a happiness as the first-fruits of the Spirit, but even we, who have such present rich receivings, cannot but long for something more and greater. In having the first-fruits of the Spirit we have that which is very precious, but we have not all we would have. *We groan within ourselves,* which denotes the strength and secrecy of these desires; not

making a loud noise, as the hypocrites howling upon the bed for corn and wine, but with silent groans, which pierce heaven soonest of all. Or, *We groan among ourselves.* It is the unanimous vote, the joint desire, of the whole church, all agree in this: *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* The groaning denotes a very earnest and importunate desire, the soul pained with the delay. Present receivings and comforts are consistent with a great many groans; not as the pangs of one dying, but as the throes of a woman in travail-groans that are symptoms of life, not of death. (2.) The object of this expectation. What is it we are thus desiring and waiting for? What would we have? *The adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.* Though the soul be the principal part of the man, yet the Lord has declared himself for the body also, and has provided a great deal of honour and happiness for the body. The resurrection is here called *the redemption of the body.* It shall then be rescued from the power of death and the grave, and the bondage of corruption; and, though a vile body, yet it shall be refined and beautified, and made like that glorious body of Christ, Phil. 3:21; 1 Co. 15:42. This is called *the adoption.* [1.] It is the adoption manifested before all the world, angels and men. Now are we the sons of God, but it does not yet appear, the honour is now clouded; but then God will publicly own all his children. The deed of adoption, which is now written, signed, and sealed, will then be recognized, proclaimed, and published. As Christ was, so the saints will be, declared to be the sons of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, ch. 1:4. It will then be put past dispute. [2.] It is the adoption perfected and completed. The children of God have bodies as well as souls; and, till those bodies are brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, the adoption is not perfect. But then it will be complete, when the Captain of our salvation shall bring the many sons to glory, Heb. 2:10. This is that which we expect, in hope of which our flesh rests, Ps. 16:9, 10. All the days of our appointed time we are waiting, till this change shall come, when he shall call, and we shall answer, and he will have a desire to the work of his hands, Job 14:14, 15. (3.) The agreeableness of this to our present state, v. 24, 25. Our happiness is not in present possession: *We are saved by hope.* In this, as in other things, God hath made our present state a state of trial and probation-that our reward is out of sight. Those that will deal with God must deal upon trust. It is acknowledged that one of the principal graces of a Christian is hope (1 Co. 13:13), which necessarily implies a good thing to come, which is the object of that hope. Faith respects the promise, hope the thing promised. Faith is the evidence, hope the expectation, of things not seen. Faith is the mother of hope. *We do with patience wait.* In hoping for this glory we have need of patience, to bear the sufferings we meet with in the way to it and the

delays of it. Our way is rough and long; but he that shall come will come, and will not tarry; and therefore, though he seem to tarry, it becomes us to wait for him.

Verses 26-28

The apostle here suggests two privileges more to which true Christians are entitled:—

I. The help of the Spirit in prayer. While we are in this world, hoping and waiting for what we see not, we must be praying. Hope supposes desire, and that desire offered up to God is prayer; we groan. Now observe,

1. Our weakness in prayer: *We know not what we should pray for as we ought.* (1.) As to the matter of our requests, we know not what to ask. We are not competent judges of our own condition. *Who knows what is good for a man in this life?* Eccl. 6:12. We are short-sighted, and very much biassed in favour of the flesh, and apt to separate the end from the way. *You know not what you ask,* Mt. 20:22. We are like foolish children, that are ready to cry for fruit before it is ripe and fit for them; see Lu. 9:54, 55. (2.) As to the manner, we know not how to pray as we ought. It is not enough that we do that which is good, but we must do it well, seek in a due order; and here we are often at a loss-graces are weak, affections cold, thoughts wandering, and it is not always easy to *find the heart to pray,* 2 Sa. 7:27. The apostle speaks of this in the first person: *We know not.* He puts himself among the rest. Folly, and weakness, and distraction in prayer, are what all the saints are complaining of. If so great a saint as Paul knew not what to pray for, what little reason have we to go forth about that duty in our own strength!

2. The assistances which the Spirit gives us in that duty. He *helps our infirmities,* meant especially of our praying infirmities, which most easily beset us in that duty, against which the Spirit helps. The Spirit in the world helps; many rules and promises there are in the word for our help. The Spirit in the heart helps, dwelling in us, working in us, as a Spirit of grace and supplication, especially with respect to the infirmities we are under when we are in a suffering state, when our faith is most apt to fail; for this end the Holy Ghost was poured out. *Helpeth, synantilambanetai—heaves with us, over against us,* helps as we help one that would lift up a burden, by lifting over against him at the other end-helps with us, that is, with us doing our endeavour, putting forth the strength we have. We must not sit still, and

expect that the Spirit should do all; when the Spirit goes before us we must bestir ourselves. We cannot without God, and he will not without us. What help? Why, the *Spirit itself makes intercession for us,* dictates our requests, indites our petitions, draws up our plea for us. Christ intercedes for us in heaven, the Spirit intercedes for us in our hearts; so graciously has God provided for the encouragement of the praying remnant. The Spirit, as an enlightening Spirit, teaches us what to pray for, as a sanctifying Spirit works and excites praying graces, as a comforting Spirit silences our fears, and helps us over all our discouragements. The Holy Spirit is the spring of all our desires and breathings towards God. Now this intercession which the Spirit makes is, (1.) *With groanings that cannot be uttered.* The strength and fervency of those desires which the Holy Spirit works are hereby intimated. There may be praying in the Spirit where there is not a word spoken; as Moses prayed (Ex. 14:15), and Hannah, 1 Sa. 1:13. It is not the rhetoric and eloquence, but the faith and fervency, of our prayers, that the Spirit works, as an intercessor, in us. *Cannot be uttered;* they are so confused, the soul is in such a hurry with temptations and troubles, we know not what to say, nor how to express ourselves. Here is the Spirit interceding with groans that cannot be uttered. When we can but cry, *Abba, Father,* and refer ourselves to him with a holy humble boldness, this is the work of the Spirit. (2.) *According to the will of God,* v. 27. The Spirit in the heart never contradicts the Spirit in the word. Those desires that are contrary to the will of God do not come from the Spirit. The Spirit interceding in us evermore melts our wills into the will of God. *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

3. The sure success of these intercessions: *He that searches the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,* v. 27. To a hypocrite, all whose religion lies in his tongue, nothing is more dreadful than that God searches the heart and sees through all his disguises. To a sincere Christian, who makes heart-work of his duty, nothing is more comfortable than that God searches the heart, for then he will hear and answer those desires which we want words to express. He knows what we have need of before we ask, Mt. 6:8. He knows what is the mind of his own Spirit in us. And, as he always hears the Son interceding for us, so he always hears the Spirit interceding in us, because his intercession is according to the will of God. What could have been done more for the comfort of the Lord's people, in all their addresses to God? Christ had said, "Whatever you ask the Father according to his will he will give it you." But how shall we learn to ask according to his will? Why, the Spirit will teach us that. Therefore it is that the seed of Jacob never seek in vain.

II. The concurrence of all providences for the good of those that are Christ's, v. 28. It might be objected that, notwithstanding all these privileges, we see believers compassed about with manifold afflictions; though the Spirit makes intercession for them, yet their troubles are continued. It is very true; but in this the Spirit's intercession is always effectual, that, however it goes with them, all this is working together for their good. Observe here.

1. The character of the saints, who are interested in this privilege; they are here described by such properties as are common to all that are truly sanctified. (1.) *They love God.* This includes all the out-goings of the soul's affections towards God as the chief good and highest end. It is our love to God that makes every providence sweet, and therefore profitable. Those that love God make the best of all he does, and take all in good part. (2.) *They are the called according to his purpose,* effectually called according to the eternal purpose. The call is effectual, not according to any merit or desert of ours, but according to God's own gracious purpose.

2. The privilege of the saints, that *all things work together for good to them,* that is, all the providences of God that concern them. All that God performs he performs for them, Ps. 57:2. Their sins are not of his performing, therefore not intended here, though his permitting sin is made to work for their good, 2 Chr. 32:31. But all the providences of God are theirs—merciful providences, afflicting providences, personal, public. They are all for good; perhaps for temporal good, as Joseph's troubles; at least, for spiritual and eternal good. That is good for them which does their souls good. Either directly or indirectly, every providence has a tendency to the spiritual good of those that love God, breaking them off from sin, bringing them nearer to God, weaning them from the world, fitting them for heaven. *Work together.* They work, as physic works upon the body, various ways, according to the intention of the physician; but all for the patient's good. *They work together,* as several ingredients in a medicine concur to answer the intention. God hath set the one over against the other (Eccl. 7:14): *synergei,* a very singular, with a noun plural, denoting the harmony of Providence and its uniform designs, all the wheels as one wheel, Eze. 10:13. *He worketh all things together for good;* so some read it. It is not from any specific quality in the providences themselves, but from the power and grace of God working in, with, and by, these providences. All this *we know*—know it for a certainty, from the word of God, from our own experience, and from the experience of all the saints.

Verses 29-30

The apostle, having reckoned up so many ingredients of the happiness of true believers, comes here to represent the ground of them all, which he lays in predestination. These precious privileges are conveyed to us by the charter of the covenant, but they are founded in the counsel of God, which infallibly secures the event. That Jesus Christ, the purchaser, might not labour in vain, nor spend his strength and life for nought and in vain, there is a remnant given him, a seed that he shall see, so that the good pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. For the explication of this he here sets before us the order of the causes of our salvation, a golden chain, which cannot be broken. There are four links of it:—

I. *Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.* All that God designed for glory and happiness as the end he decreed to grace and holiness as the way. Not, whom he did foreknow to be holy those he predestinated to be so. The counsels and decrees of God do not truckle to the frail and fickle will of men; no, God's foreknowledge of the saints is the same with that everlasting love wherewith he is said to have loved them, Jer. 31:3. God's knowing his people is the same with his owning them, Ps. 1:6; Jn. 10:14; 2 Tim. 2:19. See ch. 11:2. Words of knowledge often in scripture denote affection; so here: *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God,* 1 Pt. 1:2. And the same word is rendered *fore-ordained,* 1 Pt. 1:20. *Whom he did foreknow,* that is, whom he designed for his friends and favourites. *I know thee by name,* said God to Moses, Ex. 33:12. Now those whom god thus foreknew he did predestinate to be conformed to Christ. 1. Holiness consists in our conformity to the image of Christ. This takes in the whole of sanctification, of which Christ is the great pattern and sampler. To be spirited as Christ was, to walk and live as Christ did, to bear our sufferings patiently as Christ did. Christ is the express image of his Father, and the saints are conformed to the image of Christ. Thus it is by the mediation and interposal of Christ that we have God's love restored to us and God's likeness renewed upon us, in which two things consists the happiness of man. 2. All that God hath from eternity foreknown with favour he hath predestinated to this conformity. It is not we that can conform ourselves to Christ. Our giving ourselves to Christ takes rise in God's giving us to him; and, in giving us to him, he predestinated us to be conformable to his image. It is a mere cavil therefore to call the doctrine of election a licentious doctrine, and to argue that it gives encouragement to sin, as if the end were separated from the

way and happiness from holiness. None can know their election but by their conformity to the image of Christ; for all that are chosen are chosen to sanctification (2 Th. 2:13), and surely it cannot be a temptation to any to be conformed to the world to believe that they were predestinated to be conformed to Christ. 3. That which is herein chiefly designed is the honour of Jesus Christ, that he might be the *first-born among many brethren;* that is, that Christ might have the honour of being the great pattern, as well as the great prince, and in this, as in other things, might have pre-eminence. It was in the first-born that all the children were dedicated to God under the law. The first-born was the head of the family, on whom all the rest did depend: now in the family of the saints Christ must have the honour of being the first-born. And blessed be God that there are many brethren; though they seem but a few in one place at one time, yet, when they come all together, they will be a great many. There is, therefore, a certain number predestinated, that the end of Christ's undertaking might be infallibly secured. Had the event been left at uncertainties in the divine counsels, to depend upon the contingent turn of man's will, Christ might have been the first-born among but few or no brethren-a captain without soldiers and a prince without subjects-to prevent which, and to secure to him many brethren, the decree is absolute, the thing ascertained, that he might be sure to see his seed, there is a remnant predestinated to be conformed to his image, which decree will certainly have its accomplishment in the holiness and happiness of that chosen race; and so, in spite of all the opposition of the powers of darkness, Christ will be the first-born among many, very many brethren.

II. *Whom he did predestinate those he also called,* not only with the external call (so many are called that were not chosen, Mt. 20:16; 22:14), but with the internal and effectual call. The former comes to the ear only, but this to the heart. All that God did from eternity predestinate to grace and glory he does, in the fulness of time, effectually call. The call is then effectual when we come at the call; and we then come at the call when the Spirit draws us, convinces the conscience of guilt and wrath, enlightens the understanding, bows the will, persuades and enables us to embrace Christ in the promises, makes us willing in the day of his power. It is an effectual call from self and earth to God, and Christ, and heaven, as our end-from sin and vanity to grace, and holiness, and seriousness as our way. This is the gospel call. *Them he called,* that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand: we are called to that to which we were chosen. So that the only way to make our election sure is to make sure our calling, 2 Pt. 1:10.

III. *Whom he called those he also justified.* All that are effectually called are justified, absolved from guilt, and accepted as righteous through Jesus Christ. They are *recti in curia—right in court;* no sin that ever they have been guilty of shall come against them, to condemn them. The book is crossed, the bond cancelled, the judgment vacated, the attainder reversed; and they are no longer dealt with as criminals, but owned and loved as friends and favourites. Blessed is the man whose iniquity is thus forgiven. None are thus justified but those that are effectually called. Those that stand it out against the gospel call abide under guilt and wrath.

IV. *Whom he justified those he also glorified.* The power of corruption being broken in effectual calling, and the guilt of sin removed in justification, all that which hinders is taken out of the way, and nothing can come between that soul and glory. Observe, It is spoken of as a thing done: *He glorified,* because of the certainty of it; he *hath* saved us, and called us with a holy calling. In the eternal glorification of all the elect, God's design of love has its full accomplishment. This was what he aimed at all along-to bring them to heaven. Nothing less than that glory would make up the fulness of his covenant relation to them as God; and therefore, in all he does for them, and in them, he has this in his eye. Are they chosen? It is to salvation. Called? It is to his kingdom and glory. Begotten again? It is to an inheritance incorruptible. Afflicted: It is to work for them this exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Observe, The author of all these is the same. It is God himself that predestinated, calleth, justifieth, glorifieth; so *the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him.* Created wills are so very fickle, and created powers so very feeble, that, if any of these did depend upon the creature, the whole would shake. But God himself hath undertaken the doing of it from first to last, that we might abide in a constant dependence upon him and subjection to him, and ascribe all the praise to him-that every crown may be cast before the throne. This is a mighty encouragement to our faith and hope; for, as for God, his way, his work, is perfect. He that hath laid the foundation will build upon it, and the top-stone will at length be brought forth with shoutings, and it will be our eternal work to cry, Grace, grace to it.

Verses 31-39

The apostle closes this excellent discourse upon the privileges of believers with a holy triumph, in the name of all the saints. Having largely set forth the mystery of God's love to us in Christ, and the exceedingly great and precious

privileges we enjoy by him, he concludes like an orator: *What shall we then say to these things?* What use shall we make of all that has been said? He speaks as one amazed and swallowed up with the contemplation and admiration of it, wondering at the height and depth, and length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. The more we know of other things the less we wonder at them; but the further we are led into an acquaintance with gospel mysteries the more we are affected with the admiration of them. If Paul was at a loss what to say to these things, no marvel if we be. And what does he say? Why, if ever Paul rode in a triumphant chariot on this side of heaven, here it was: with such a holy height and bravery of spirit, with such a fluency and copiousness of expression, does he here comfort himself and all the people of God, upon the consideration of these privileges. In general, he here makes a challenge, throws down the gauntlet, as it were, dares all the enemies of the saints to do their worst: *If God be for us, who can be against us?* The ground of the challenge is God's being for us; in this he sums up all our privileges. This includes all, that *God is for us;* not only reconciled to us, and so not against us, but in covenant with us, and so engaged for us-all his attributes for us, his promises for us. All that he is, and has, and does, is for his people. He performs all things for them. He is for them, even when he seems to act against them. And, if so, *who can be against us,* so as to prevail against us, so as to hinder our happiness? Be they ever so great and strong, ever so many, ever so might, ever so malicious, what can they do? While God is for us, and we keep in his love, we may with a holy boldness defy all the powers of darkness. Let Satan do his worst, he is chained; let the world do its worst, it is conquered: principalities and powers are spoiled and disarmed, and triumphed over, in the cross of Christ. Who then dares fight against us, while God himself is fighting for us? And this we say to these things, this is the inference we draw from these premises. More particularly.

I. We have supplies ready in all our wants (v. 32): *He that spared,* etc. Who can be against us, to strip us, to deprive us of our comforts? Who can cut off our streams, while we have a fountain to go to? 1. Observe what God has done for us, on which our hopes are built: *He spared not his own Son.* When he was to undertake our salvation, the Father was willing to part with him, did not think him too precious a gift to bestow for the salvation of poor souls; now we may know that he loves us, in that he hath not withheld his Son, his own Son, his only Son, from us, as he said of Abraham, Gen. 22:12. If nothing less will save man, rather than man shall perish let him go, though it were out of his bosom. Thus did he *deliver him up for us all,* that is, for all the

elect; *for us all,* not only for our good, but in our stead, as a sacrifice of atonement to be a propitiation for sin. When he had undertaken it, he did not spare him. Though he was his own Son, yet, being made sin for us, it pleased the Lord to bruise him. *Ouk epheisato—he did not abate* him a farthing of that great debt, but charged it home. *Awake, O sword.* He did not *spare his own Son that served him,* that he might spare us, though we have done him so much disservice. 2. What we may therefore expect he will do: He will *with him freely give us all things.* (1.) It is implied that he will give us Christ, for other things are bestowed with him: not only with him given for us, but with him given to us. He that put himself to so much charge to make the purchase for us surely will not hesitate at making the application to us. (2.) He will with him freely give us all things, all things that he sees to be needful and necessary for us, all good things, and more we should not desire, Ps. 34:10. And Infinite Wisdom shall be the judge whether it be good for us and needful for us or no. *Freely give*—freely, without reluctancy; he is ready to give, meets us with his favours;—and freely, without recompence, without money, and without price. *How shall he not?* Can it be imagined that he should do the greater and not do the less? that he should give so great a gift for us when we were enemies, and should deny us any good thing, now that through him we are friends and children? Thus may we by faith argue against our fears of want. he that hath prepared a crown and kingdom for us will be sure to give us enough to bear our charges in the way to it. He that hath designed us for the inheritance of sons when we come to age will not let us want necessaries in the mean time.

II. We have an answer ready to all accusations and a security against all condemnations (v. 33, 34): *Who shall lay any thing?* Doth the law accuse them? Do their own consciences accuse them? Is the devil, the accuser of the brethren, accusing them before our God day and night? This is enough to answer all those accusations, *It is God that justifieth.* Men may justify themselves, as the Pharisees did, and yet the accusations may be in full force against them; but, if God justifies, this answers all. He is the judge, the king, the party offended, and his judgment is according to truth, and sooner or later all the world will be brought to be of his mind; so that we may challenge all our accusers to come and put in their charge. This overthrows them all; it is God, the righteous faithful God, that justifieth. *Who is he that condemneth?* Though they cannot make good the charge yet they will be ready to condemn; but we have a plea ready to move in arrest of judgment, a plea which cannot be overruled. *It is Christ that died,* etc. It is by virtue of our interest in Christ, our relation to him, and our union with him, that we are

thus secured. 1. His death: *It is Christ that died.* By the merit of his death he paid our debt; and the surety's payment is a good plea to an action of debt. It is Christ, an able all-sufficient Saviour. 2. His resurrection: *Yea, rather, that has risen again.* This is a much greater encouragement, for it is a convincing evidence that divine justice was satisfied by the merit of his death. His resurrection was his acquittance, it was a legal discharge. Therefore the apostle mentions it with a *yea, rather.* If he had died, and not risen again, we had been where we were. 3. His sitting at the right hand of God: He is *even at the right hand of God*—a further evidence that he has done his work, and a mighty encouragement to us in reference to all accusations, that we have a friend, such a friend, in court. At *the right hand of God,* which denotes that he is ready there-always at hand; and that he is ruling there-all power is given to him. Our friend is himself the judge. 4. The intercession which he makes there. He is there, not unconcerned about us, not forgetful of us, but *making intercession.* He is agent for us there, an advocate for us, to answer all accusations, to put in our plea, and to prosecute it with effect, to appear for us and to present our petitions. And is not this abundant matter for comfort? What shall we say to these things? Is this the manner of men, O Lord God? What room is left for doubting and disquietment? Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Some understand the accusation and condemnation here spoken of of that which the suffering saints met with from men. The primitive Christians had many black crimes laid to their charge-heresy, sedition, rebellion, and what not? For these the ruling powers condemned them: "But no matter for that" (says the apostle); "while we stand right at God's bar it is of no great moment how we stand at men's. To all the hard censures, the malicious calumnies, and the unjust and unrighteous sentences of men, we may with comfort oppose our justification before God through Christ Jesus as that which doth abundantly countervail," 1 Co. 4:3, 4.

III. We have good assurance of our preservation and continuance in this blessed state, v. 35, to the end. The fears of the saints lest they should lose their hold of Christ are often very discouraging and disquieting, and create them a great deal of disturbance; but here is that which may silence their fears, and still such storms, that nothing can separate them. We have here from the apostle,

1. A daring challenge to all the enemies of the saints to separate them, if they could, from the love of Christ. *Who shall?* None shall, v. 35-37. God having manifested his love in giving his own Son for us, and not hesitating at that, can we imagine that any thing else should divert or dissolve that love?

Observe here,

(1.) The present calamities of Christ's beloved ones supposed-that they meet with *tribulation* on all hands, are in *distress,* know not which way to look for any succour and relief in this world, are followed with *persecution* from an angry malicious world that always hated those whom Christ loved, pinched with *famine,* and starved with *nakedness,* when stripped of all *creature-comforts,* exposed to the greatest *perils,* the *sword* of the magistrate drawn against them, ready to be sheathed in their bowels, bathed in their blood. Can a case be supposed more black and dismal? It is illustrated (v. 36) by a passage quoted from Ps. 44:22, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long,* which intimates that we are not to think strange, no not concerning the fiery bloody trial. We see the Old-Testament saints had the same lot; so persecuted they the prophets that were before us. *Killed all the day long,* that is, continually exposed to and expecting the fatal stroke. There is still every day, and all the day long, one or other of the people of God bleeding and dying under the rage of persecuting enemies. *Accounted as sheep for the slaughter;* they make no more of killing a Christian than of butchering a sheep. Sheep are killed, not because they are hurtful while they live, but because they are useful when they are dead. They kill the Christians to please themselves, to be food to their malice. *They eat up my people as they eat bread,* Ps. 14:4.

(2.) The inability of all these things to separate us from the love of Christ. Shall they, can they, do it? No, by no means. All this will not cut the bond of love and friendship that is between Christ and true believers. [1.] Christ doth not, will not, love us the less for all this. All these troubles are very consistent with the strong and constant love of the Lord Jesus. They are neither a cause nor an evidence of the abatement of his love. When Paul was whipped, and beaten, and imprisoned, and stoned, did Christ love him ever the less? Were his favours intermitted? his smiles any whit suspended? his visits more shy? By no means, but the contrary. These things separate us from the love of other friends. When Paul was brought before Nero all men forsook him, but then the Lord stood by him, 2 Tim. 4:16, 17. Whatever persecuting enemies may rob us of, they cannot rob us of the love of Christ, they cannot intercept his love-tokens, they cannot interrupt nor exclude his visits: and therefore, let them do their worst, they cannot make a true believer miserable. [2.] We do not, will not, love him the less for this; and that for this reason, because we do not think that he loves us the less. Charity thinks no evil, entertains no misgiving thoughts, makes no hard conclusions, no unkind constructions,

takes all in good part that comes from love. A true Christian loves Christ never the less though he suffer for him, thinks never the worse of Christ through he lose all for him.

(3.) The triumph of believers in this (v. 37): *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors.*

[1.] We are conquerors: though killed all the day long, yet conquerors. A strange way of conquering, but it was Christ's way; thus he triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross. It is a surer and a nobler way of conquest by faith and patience than by fire and sword. The enemies have sometimes confessed themselves baffled and overcome by the invincible courage and constancy of the martyrs, who thus overcame the most victorious princes by not loving their lives to the death, Rev. 12:11.

[2.] We are more than conquerors. In our patiently bearing these trials we are not only conquerors, but more than conquerors, that is, triumphers. Those are more than conquerors that conquer, *First,* With little loss. Many conquests are dearly bought; but what do the suffering saints lose? Why, they lose that which the gold loses in the furnace, nothing but the dross. It is no great loss to lose things which are not-a body that is of the earth, earthy. *Secondly,* With great gain. The spoils are exceedingly rich; glory, honour, and peace, a crown of righteousness that fades not away. In this the suffering saints have triumphed; not only have not been separated from the love of Christ, but have been taken into the most sensible endearments and embraces of it. As afflictions abound, consolations much more abound, 2 Co. 1:5. There is one more than a conqueror, when pressed above measure. He that embraced the stake, and said, "Welcome the cross of Christ, welcome everlasting life,"—he that dated his letter from the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison,—he that said, "In these flames I feel no more pain than if I were upon a bed of down,"—she who, a little before her martyrdom, being asked how she did, said, "Well and merry, and going to heaven,"—those that have gone smiling to the stake, and stood singing in the flames-these were more than conquerors.

[3.] It is only *through Christ that loved us,* the merit of his death taking the sting out of all these troubles, the Spirit of his grace strengthening us, and enabling us to bear them with holy courage and constancy, and coming in with special comforts and supports. Thus we are conquerors, not in our own strength, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. We are conquerors by virtue

of our interest in Christ's victory. He hath overcome the world for us (Jn. 16:33), both the good things and the evil things of it; so that we have nothing to do but to pursue the victory, and to divide the spoil, and so are more than conquerors.

2. A direct and positive conclusion of the whole matter: *For I am persuaded,* v. 38, 39. It denotes a full, and strong, and affectionate persuasion, arising from the experience of the strength and sweetness of the divine love. And here he enumerates all those things which might be supposed likely to separate between Christ and believers, and concludes that it could not be done. (1.) *Neither death nor life*—neither the terrors of death on the one hand nor the comforts and pleasures of life on the other, neither the fear of death nor the hope of life. Or, We shall not be separated from that love either in death or in life. (2.) *Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers.* Both the good angels and the bad are called principalities and powers: the good, Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16; the bad, Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15. And neither shall do it. The good angels will not, the bad shall not; and neither can. The good angels are engaged friends, the bad are restrained enemies. (3.) *Nor things present, nor things to come*—neither the sense of troubles present nor the fear of troubles to come. Time shall not separate us, eternity shall not. Things present separate us from things to come, and things to come separate and cut us off from things present; but neither from the love of Christ, whose favour is twisted in with both present things and things to come. (4.) *Nor height, nor depth*—neither the height of prosperity and preferment, nor the depth of adversity and disgrace; nothing from heaven above, no storms, no tempests; nothing on earth below, no rocks, no seas, no dungeons. (5.) *Nor any other creature*—any thing that can be named or thought of. It will not, it cannot, separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It cannot cut off or impair our love to God, or God's to us; nothing does it, can do it, but sin. Observe, The love that exists between God and true believers is through Christ. He is the Mediator of our love: it is in and through him that God can love us and that we dare love God. This is the ground of the stedfastness of the love; therefore God rests in his love (Zep. 3:17), because Jesus Christ, in whom he loves us, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Mr. Hugh Kennedy, an eminent Christian of Ayr, in Scotland, when he was dying, called for a Bible; but, finding his sight gone, he said, "Turn me to the eighty of the Romans, and set my finger at these words, *I am persuaded that neither death nor life,"* etc. "Now," said he, "is my finger upon them?" And,

when they told him it was, without speaking any more, he said, "Now, God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night;" and so departed.

God’s desire for righteousness, **love**, and **His role in empowering believers to live by the Spirit:**

God desires righteousness and love in His people and empowers believers to live by the Spirit, enabling them to walk in His ways and overcome the flesh, ultimately reflecting His character and fulfilling His purpose.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

God's Desire for Righteousness and Love:

- **Righteousness:**

God desires that believers pursue a life that is pleasing to Him, characterized by integrity, justice, and a commitment to His word.

- **Love:**

God's primary attribute is love, and He desires that believers reflect His love for one another and for others, extending compassion and grace.

- **Scriptural Basis:**
    - "The Lord detests the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue righteousness" (Proverbs 15:9).
    - "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).
    - "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit's Role in Empowering Believers:

- **Indwelling and Empowerment:**

When believers place their faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit indwells them and empowers them to live for righteousness.

- **Guidance and Illumination:**

The Holy Spirit guides believers into all truth, revealing God's Word and helping them understand its meaning.

- **Fruit of the Spirit:**

As believers "walk in the Spirit," the Holy Spirit produces fruit in their lives that reflects His character, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

- **Overcoming the Flesh:**

The Holy Spirit helps believers overcome the desires of the flesh, which are characterized by selfishness and sin.

- **Boldness and Witness:**

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ, giving them boldness to testify about Him.

- **Sanctification:**

The Holy Spirit is essential to sanctification, the process of becoming more like Jesus, a gift of the fullness of salvation.

- **Scriptural Basis:**
    - "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).
    - "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).
    - "The Holy Spirit unites the believer with Christ and places him in the body of Christ, the church".

The Greek words for "Spirit" (πνεῦμα, pneuma), "flesh" (σάρξ, sarx), and "fruit" (καρπός, karpos) highlight God's role in guiding believers by **contrasting the natural, sinful inclinations of the flesh with the supernatural, God-given qualities of the Spirit, and the resulting fruit of a life lived in alignment with God's will**. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Here's a more detailed explanation: [5, 6]

- **Spirit (πνεῦμα, pneuma):** [5, 6]
    - The word "spirit" in Greek can mean "breath," "wind," or "spirit". [5, 6]
    - It refers to the Holy Spirit, God's active presence and power in believers' lives. [5, 7]
    - The Spirit guides, empowers, and transforms believers, leading them to live according to God's will. [3, 5, 7]
    - The Holy Spirit is also known as the "Spirit of God". [5]
- **Flesh (σάρξ, sarx):** [1, 8, 9]
    - "Flesh" in this context refers to the human nature, particularly in its fallen state, characterized by sin and self-centeredness. [1, 8, 9]
    - It represents the natural inclinations and desires that are contrary to God's will. [1, 8, 9]
    - Living according to the flesh leads to the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21), which are destructive and ultimately lead away from God. [1, 10]
- **Fruit (καρπός, karpos):** [1, 11]
    - "Fruit" in this context refers to the natural product of a living thing, in this case, the Holy Spirit. [1, 11]
    - The "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23) are the qualities and characteristics that are produced in a believer's life when they are filled with and walk in the Spirit. [2, 3, 11, 12]
    - These include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16]
    - The fruit of the Spirit demonstrates the transformative power of God's Spirit in the believer's life. [3, 11, 12]

How these words emphasize God's role in guiding believers: [1, 8, 9]

- **Contrast:** The concept of "flesh" versus "Spirit" highlights the fundamental conflict between human nature and God's nature.

Believers are called to choose to live by the Spirit, submitting to God's guidance and power rather than following their own desires. [1, 8, 9]

- **Transformation:** The fruit of the Spirit demonstrates the transformative power of God's Spirit in believers' lives. As believers yield to the Spirit, they are changed from the inside out, bearing fruit that reflects God's character. [3, 11, 12]
- **Dependence:** The emphasis on the Spirit as the source of the fruit underscores the believer's dependence on God for guidance and power. The fruit of the Spirit is not something that believers can produce on their own, but rather a gift from God that is cultivated through a relationship with Him. [3, 5, 7]
- **Evidence:** The fruit of the Spirit serves as evidence of a believer's relationship with God and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. It is a visible manifestation of the unseen, spiritual reality of God's grace and power. [2, 3, 11, 12]

Look at the Greek words for Spirit, flesh, and fruit. How do these emphasize God’s role in guiding believers?:

The Greek words for "Spirit" (πνεῦμα, pneuma), "flesh" (σάρξ, sarx), and "fruit" (καρπός, karpos) highlight God's role in guiding believers by contrasting the natural, sinful inclinations of the flesh with the supernatural, God-given qualities of the Spirit, and the resulting fruit of a life lived in alignment with God's will.

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How these words emphasize God's role in guiding believers:

- **Contrast:**

The concept of "flesh" versus "Spirit" highlights the fundamental conflict between human nature and God's nature. Believers are called to choose to live by the Spirit, submitting to God's guidance and power rather than following their own desires.

- **Transformation:**

The fruit of the Spirit demonstrates the transformative power of God's Spirit in believers' lives. As believers yield to the Spirit, they are changed from the inside out, bearing fruit that reflects God's character.

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The emphasis on the Spirit as the source of the fruit underscores the believer's dependence on God for guidance and power. The fruit of the Spirit is not something that believers can produce on their own, but rather a gift from God that is cultivated through a relationship with Him.

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The fruit of the Spirit serves as evidence of a believer's relationship with God and the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. It is a visible manifestation of the unseen, spiritual reality of God's grace and power.

[1] https://biblehub.com/study/chapters/galatians/5.htm

[2] https://harvestbiblechurch.nm-secure.com/blog/the-ninefold-fruit-of-the-spirit

[3] https://gominno.com/blog/what-is-the-fruit-of-the-spirit/

[4] https://houseofhealingdmv.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/HOH_FruitoftheSpirit_020920-1.pdf

[5] https://www.firstcenturycf.org/post/spirit

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pneuma

[7] https://www.moodybible.org/beliefs/holy-spirit/

[8] https://biblehub.com/greek/4561.htm

[9] https://wpmu2.azurewebsites.net/nlt/2022/05/17/word-studies-in-the-new-living-translation-%CF%83%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BE-sarx/

[10] https://www.askanadventistfriend.com/understanding-the-bible/new-testament/what-is-the-fruit-of-the-holy-spirit-in-the-bible/

[11] https://alc.net.au/fruit-of-the-spirit-fruits-unveiling-nine-powerful-qualities-to-transform-your-life/

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[13] https://www.compassion.com/christian-faith/fruit-of-the-spirit.htm

[14] https://www.churchbiblestudies.org/galatians-513-26-notes

[15] https://www.ucg.org/learn/beyond-today-magazine/beyond-today-magazine-may-june-2019/fruit-holy-spirit-what-are-these

[16] https://www.kilmacudparish.ie/the-gifts-fruits-of-holy-spirit/

Search “God’s nature in Galatians 5” to learn about God’s relationship with believers through the Holy Spirit.:

In Galatians 5, the apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of walking in the Spirit, not the flesh, and highlights the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of God's presence and power in believers' lives, contrasting it with the works of the flesh.

Here's a deeper look at God's nature and relationship with believers through the Holy Spirit, as revealed in Galatians 5:

- The Conflict:

Galatians 5:16-18 describes an internal conflict between the "flesh" (our sinful nature) and the "Spirit" (God's Holy Spirit), stating that these two are opposed to each other, preventing believers from doing what they desire in accordance with God's will.

- Walking in the Spirit:

Paul encourages believers to "walk by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16), meaning to allow the Holy Spirit to guide their lives and lead them in obedience to God.

- The Fruit of the Spirit:

Galatians 5:22-23 lists the "fruit of the Spirit" as evidence of a life led by the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- The Works of the Flesh:

Conversely, Galatians 5:19-21 lists the "works of the flesh" as the results of a life dominated by the sinful nature, including sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfishness, envy, drunkenness, and orgies.

- Freedom in Christ:

Galatians 5:1 emphasizes the freedom believers have in Christ, urging them not to use this freedom as an excuse for self-indulgence or to return to a life of legalism.

- The Holy Spirit's Role:

The Holy Spirit is not merely a gift, but a powerful presence that empowers believers to overcome their sinful nature and live a life pleasing to God.

- Dependence on God:

Galatians 5:25 reminds believers that since they live by the Spirit, they should also walk in step with the Spirit, emphasizing the importance of dependence on God's guidance and power.

- God's Character:

The fruit of the Spirit reflects God's character, demonstrating that God is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- Living Out God's Nature:

By allowing the Holy Spirit to lead, believers are empowered to manifest God's character in their lives, demonstrating the power of the Gospel and the transformative nature of faith in Christ.

In Galatians 5, **the apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of walking in the Spirit, not the flesh, and highlights the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of God's presence and power in believers' lives, contrasting it with the works of the flesh.** [1, 2, 3, 4]

Here's a deeper look at God's nature and relationship with believers through the Holy Spirit, as revealed in Galatians 5: [4, 5, 6, 7]

- **The Conflict:** Galatians 5:16-18 describes an internal conflict between the "flesh" (our sinful nature) and the "Spirit" (God's Holy Spirit), stating that these two are opposed to each other, preventing believers from doing what they desire in accordance with God's will. [4, 5, 6, 7]
- **Walking in the Spirit:** Paul encourages believers to "walk by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16), meaning to allow the Holy Spirit to guide their lives and lead them in obedience to God. [2, 4, 8]
- **The Fruit of the Spirit:** Galatians 5:22-23 lists the "fruit of the Spirit" as evidence of a life led by the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [1, 2, 9]
- **The Works of the Flesh:** Conversely, Galatians 5:19-21 lists the "works of the flesh" as the results of a life dominated by the sinful nature, including sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, witchcraft,

hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfishness, envy, drunkenness, and orgies. [1, 2, 4, 10]

- **Freedom in Christ:** Galatians 5:1 emphasizes the freedom believers have in Christ, urging them not to use this freedom as an excuse for self-indulgence or to return to a life of legalism. [4, 11, 12]
- **The Holy Spirit's Role:** The Holy Spirit is not merely a gift, but a powerful presence that empowers believers to overcome their sinful nature and live a life pleasing to God. [1, 8, 13]
- **Dependence on God:** Galatians 5:25 reminds believers that since they live by the Spirit, they should also walk in step with the Spirit, emphasizing the importance of dependence on God's guidance and power. [14, 15]
- **God's Character:** The fruit of the Spirit reflects God's character, demonstrating that God is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [1, 2, 9]
- **Living Out God's Nature:** By allowing the Holy Spirit to lead, believers are empowered to manifest God's character in their lives, demonstrating the power of the Gospel and the transformative nature of faith in Christ. [1, 8, 9]

Generative AI is experimental.

[1] https://www.compassion.com/christian-faith/fruit-of-the-spirit.htm

[2] https://www.gotquestions.org/walk-by-the-Spirit.html

[3] https://www.jesuswalk.com/galatians/8_fruit.htm

[4] https://www.pursuegod.org/sinful-nature-vs-fruit-spirit/

[5] https://covenantpensacola.org/2021/02/20/galatians-516-18-sermon-22-the-opposing-desires-of-the-flesh-and-of-the-spirit/

[6] https://www.quora.com/In-Galatians-5-what-are-the-fruits-of-the-Holy-Spirit-that-are-given-to-you

[7] https://www.bibleref.com/Galatians/5/Galatians-5-17.html

[8] https://www.revival.tv/sermons/galatians-expository/the-fruit-of-the-spirit/

[9] https://www.thebrooksideinstitute.net/blog/character-counts-the-fruit-of-the-spirit-galatians-522-23

[10] https://studyscriptureonline.com/sermons/galatians-519-21/

[11] https://www.preceptaustin.org/galatians-5-commentary

[12] https://www.bibleref.com/Galatians/5/Galatians-chapter-5.html

[13] https://lifehopeandtruth.com/god/holy-spirit/the-fruit-of-the-spirit/works-of-the-flesh-fruit-of-the-spirit/

[14] https://biblehub.com/galatians/5-25.htm

[15] https://www.gotquestions.org/keep-in-step-with-the-Spirit.html

Search for “flesh vs spirit in Galatians 5” to understand the contrast Paul makes between living by the flesh and living by the Spirit.:

In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts "flesh" (sinful human nature) with "Spirit" (God's empowering influence), highlighting the conflict between them and emphasizing that living by the Spirit leads to a life of fruit, while living by the flesh results in works that are harmful and destructive.

Living by the Flesh (Galatians 5:19-21):

- Definition:

Paul describes the "works of the flesh" as a list of actions and attitudes that stem from a self-centered, unspiritual way of life.

- Examples:

These include sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, and orgies.

- Consequences:

Living according to the flesh leads to a life that is ultimately unfulfilling and destructive, both for oneself and for others.

Living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23):

- Definition:

Paul contrasts the "works of the flesh" with the "fruit of the Spirit," which are characteristics of a life empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

- Examples:

The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- Consequences:

Living by the Spirit leads to a life characterized by these positive qualities, demonstrating God's character and bringing about positive change in the world.

The Conflict (Galatians 5:16-17):

- Inherent Tension:

Paul explains that the flesh and the Spirit are in opposition to each other, creating an internal conflict within a Christian.

- Guidance:

The Spirit guides believers toward a life of holiness and righteousness, while the flesh pulls them toward sin and self-gratification.

- Choice:

Christians must choose to live by the Spirit, resisting the desires of the flesh and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead their lives.

In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts "flesh" (sinful human nature) with "Spirit" (God's empowering influence), highlighting the conflict between them and emphasizing that living by the Spirit leads to a life of fruit, while living by the flesh results in works that are harmful and destructive. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Living by the Flesh (Galatians 5:19-21): [2, 4]

- **Definition: Paul describes the "works of the flesh" as a list of actions and attitudes that stem from a self-centered, unspiritual way of life. [2, 4]**

- **Examples: These include sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, and orgies. [2, 4, 6]**
- **Consequences: Living according to the flesh leads to a life that is ultimately unfulfilling and destructive, both for oneself and for others. [1, 2, 4]**

Living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23): [3]

- **Definition: Paul contrasts the "works of the flesh" with the "fruit of the Spirit," which are characteristics of a life empowered by God's Holy Spirit. [3]**
- **Examples: The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [3]**
- **Consequences: Living by the Spirit leads to a life characterized by these positive qualities, demonstrating God's character and bringing about positive change in the world. [1, 3]**

The Conflict (Galatians 5:16-17): [1, 2, 5]

- **Inherent Tension: Paul explains that the flesh and the Spirit are in opposition to each other, creating an internal conflict within a Christian.**
- **Guidance: The Spirit guides believers toward a life of holiness and righteousness, while the flesh pulls them toward sin and self-gratification.**
- **Choice: Christians must choose to live by the Spirit, resisting the desires of the flesh and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead their lives. [1, 2, 5]**

Generative AI is experimental.

[1] https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=HBK1LgbR-dA&pp=ygUNI291cnliZWxpZWYxNg%3D%3D

[2] https://westpalmbeachchurchofchrist.com/new-testament/galatians-new-testament/its-obvious-galatians-519-21.html

[3] **https://www.compassion.com/christian-faith/fruit-of-the-spirit.htm**

[4] **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galatians_5**

[5] **https://www.quora.com/Can-you-explain-what-the-flesh-lusts-against-the-Spirit-Galatians-5-17-means**

[6] **https://rccgmiracleland.org/bible_study/view/1196/the_acts___works_of_the_flesh_text__galatians_5_19_21**

fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5" to examine the meaning of each fruit (love, joy, peace, etc.).:

In Galatians 5:22-23, the "fruit of the Spirit" refers to a collection of nine characteristics that result from the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Here's a deeper look at each fruit:

- Love:

This is not just an emotion, but an active, sacrificial choice to care for others, mirroring Christ's love for humanity.

- Joy:

This is a deep, abiding happiness that comes from a relationship with God, not from circumstances.

- Peace:

This is a sense of inner tranquility and assurance, even amidst life's challenges, stemming from faith in God.

- Patience:

This is the ability to endure difficulties and remain calm, even when faced with injustice or frustration, demonstrating a willingness to wait on God's timing.

- Kindness:

This is a gentle and compassionate attitude towards others, characterized by empathy and a desire to do good.

- Goodness:

This is a moral uprightness, a desire to live a life that is pleasing to God and reflects His character.

- Faithfulness:

This is a steadfast commitment to God and to others, marked by trustworthiness and reliability.

- Gentleness:

This is a soft and unassuming manner, characterized by humility and a willingness to serve others.

- Self-control:

This is the ability to manage one's impulses and desires, resisting temptation and acting with wisdom and discipline.

In Galatians 5:22-23, the "fruit of the Spirit" refers to **a collection of nine characteristics that result from the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life**: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11]

Here's a deeper look at each fruit: [1, 12]

- **Love:** This is not just an emotion, but an active, sacrificial choice to care for others, mirroring Christ's love for humanity.
- **Joy:** This is a deep, abiding happiness that comes from a relationship with God, not from circumstances.
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[1] https://www.nationalshrine.org/blog/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-love-joy-peace/

[2] https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holy-spirit/what-are-the-fruits-of-the-spirit.html

[3] https://www.bibleref.com/Galatians/5/Galatians-5-22.html

[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQUyu75Y2rI

[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0Co6fgZ7VQ

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fruit_of_the_Holy_Spirit

[7] https://www.quora.com/What-do-these-all-mean-the-fruit-of-the-Spirit-includes-love-joy-peace-forbearance-patience-kindness-goodness-faithfulness-gentleness-and-self-control-By-their-fruits-you-shall-know-them-And-beware-of-wolves-in

[8] https://harvestbiblechurch.nm-secure.com/blog/the-ninefold-fruit-of-the-spirit

[9] https://www.amazon.com/Galatians-patience-faithfulness-gentleness-self-control/dp/B0799FB2QR

[10] https://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/51065/the-fruit-of-the-spirit

[11] https://crossings.church/media/sermons/fruit-of-the-spirit

[12] https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/what-are-the-fruit-of-the-spirit-and-how-do-we-grow-them.html

Deeper breakdown of the Greek terms behind “works of the flesh” and “fruit of the Spirit.”:

In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts "works of the flesh" (Greek: sarx) with "fruit of the Spirit" (Greek: pneuma), highlighting the difference between living according to human desires and being led by God's Spirit.

Works of the Flesh (Galatians 5:19-21):

- Greek Term:

sarx (σάρξ) - While often translated as "flesh," it refers to the natural, unregenerate human condition and its desires, not just the physical body.

- Meaning:

The "works of the flesh" are actions and attitudes that stem from this unregenerate nature and lead away from God.

- Examples:
    - Sexual immorality: Adultery, fornication, impurity, sensuality.
    - Idolatry: Giving something other than God the primary place in one's affections.
    - Sorcery: Engaging in occult practices or magic.
    - Hatred, strife, jealousy, anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, orgies .

Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23):

- Greek Term:

pneuma (πνεῦμα) - Refers to the Holy Spirit, God's active presence and power in believers' lives.

- Meaning:

The "fruit of the Spirit" are the characteristics and behaviors that are produced by the Holy Spirit in those who are led by Him.

- Examples:
    - Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control .

In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts "works of the flesh" (Greek: sarx) with "fruit of the Spirit" (Greek: pneuma), highlighting the difference between living according to human desires and being led by God's Spirit. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Works of the Flesh (Galatians 5:19-21): [1, 2, 3, 4]

- **Greek Term: sarx (σάρξ) - While often translated as "flesh," it refers to the natural, unregenerate human condition and its desires, not just the physical body. [1, 2, 3, 4]**
- **Meaning: The "works of the flesh" are actions and attitudes that stem from this unregenerate nature and lead away from God. [1, 2, 3, 4]**
- **Examples: [1, 2, 3, 4]**

Sexual immorality:

Adultery, fornication, impurity, sensuality. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Idolatry:

Giving something other than God the primary place in one's affections. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Sorcery:

Engaging in occult practices or magic. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Hatred, strife, jealousy, anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, orgies

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Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23): [1, 2, 3, 4]

- **Greek Term: pneuma (πνεῦμα) - Refers to the Holy Spirit, God's active presence and power in believers' lives. [1, 2, 3, 4]**
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- **Examples: [1, 2, 3, 4]**

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

. [1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7]

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[1] https://renner.org/article/the-works-of-the-flesh/

[2] https://www.compassion.com/christian-faith/fruit-of-the-spirit.htm

[3] https://twojourneys.org/sermons/series/galatians/the-acts-of-the-flesh-vs-the-fruit-of-the-spirit-galatians-sermon-22-of-26/

[4] https://lifehopeandtruth.com/god/holy-spirit/the-fruit-of-the-spirit/works-of-the-flesh-fruit-of-the-spirit/

[5] https://biblehelpsinc.org/publication/the-works-of-the-flesh/

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fruit_of_the_Holy_Spirit

[7] https://www.nationalshrine.org/blog/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-love-joy-peace/

Search for discussions on how the flesh leads to behaviors like anger, strife, and jealousy:

In a religious context, the "flesh" often refers to our natural, sinful tendencies, and behaviors like anger, strife, and jealousy are seen as manifestations of these desires, as outlined in passages like Galatians 5:19-21.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

- ***The "Flesh" as a Term:***

In theological discussions, the term "flesh" represents the human nature that is inclined toward sin and self-centeredness, in contrast to the Spirit, which is the influence of God.

- ***Galatians 5:19-21:***

This passage lists specific behaviors as "works of the flesh," including "sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing".

- ***Anger:***

Anger, according to this perspective, stems from a lack of self-control and a tendency to prioritize one's own desires and emotions over others.

- ***Strife:***

Strife, or conflict, arises from the desire for power, control, and the inability to resolve disagreements peacefully, which is characteristic of the flesh.

- ***Jealousy:***

Jealousy is often rooted in insecurity and a desire to possess what others have, rather than being content with what one has, which is a manifestation of the flesh's self-centeredness.

- ***The Contrast with the Spirit:***

The passage contrasts the "works of the flesh" with the "fruit of the Spirit," which includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- ***The Struggle:***

Believers are often described as being in a constant struggle between the flesh and the Spirit, with the goal of being led by the Spirit and suppressing the desires of the flesh.

- ***Biblical Examples:***

The Bible provides numerous examples of how these behaviors manifest in human lives, highlighting the destructive consequences of living according to the flesh.

- ***Overcoming the Flesh:***

The solution, according to this perspective, is to rely on the Holy Spirit, who empowers believers to overcome the desires of the flesh and live according to God's will.

In a religious context, the "flesh" often refers to our natural, sinful tendencies, and behaviors like anger, strife, and jealousy are seen as manifestations of these desires, as outlined in passages like Galatians 5:19-21. [1, 2, 3]

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- ***Anger: Anger, according to this perspective, stems from a lack of self-control and a tendency to prioritize one's own desires and emotions over others. [6, 7]***
- ***Strife: Strife, or conflict, arises from the desire for power, control, and the inability to resolve disagreements peacefully, which is characteristic of the flesh. [1, 2, 8]***
- ***Jealousy: Jealousy is often rooted in insecurity and a desire to possess what others have, rather than being content with what one has, which is a manifestation of the flesh's self-centeredness. [1, 2, 9]***
- ***The Contrast with the Spirit: The passage contrasts the "works of the flesh" with the "fruit of the Spirit," which includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. [10]***

- ***The Struggle: Believers are often described as being in a constant struggle between the flesh and the Spirit, with the goal of being led by the Spirit and suppressing the desires of the flesh. [4, 10]***
- ***Biblical Examples: The Bible provides numerous examples of how these behaviors manifest in human lives, highlighting the destructive consequences of living according to the flesh. [1, 2, 8]***
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[1] https://www.bible.com/bible/compare/GAL.5.19-21

[2] https://www.gotquestions.org/the-flesh.html

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galatians_5

[4] https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/100511/what-aspects-of-normal-human-behavior-have-people-mistaken-as-the-work-of-the-fl

[5] https://www.rmcchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/what-is-the-flesh.pdf

[6] https://www.thebridgewired.com/devo/2021/1-12

[7] https://woodlandhillsnashville.com/topical/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-topical/the-enemy-of-love.html

[8] https://biblehub.com/1_corinthians/3-3.htm

[9] https://mindfulhealthsolutions.com/the-deeper-meaning-of-jealousy-a-psychological-exploration/

[10] https://www.unity.org/bible-interpretations/galatians-516-26-live-spirit-i-say-and-do-not-gratify-desires-fo-flesh

[-] https://www.gotquestions.org/the-flesh.html

[-] https://www.astrology.com/numerology/angel-numbers/1119-meaning

[-] https://de.scribd.com/document/240604589/I-Am-Not-Ashamed-for-the-Gospel

[-] https://villagebible.church/articles/alcohol-and-the-christian/

The Spirit is Willing, But the Flesh is Weak

We all face the struggle of dealing with our flesh. Paul said, “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God…” (Romans 8:6-7) Imagine it! Hostile to God!

We all have a flesh and it does not magically vanish when a person becomes a believer. Jesus said, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” The flesh is our old, carnal nature. It must be dealt with. Think of it as the weak-willed man within us. Our fallen nature has a side to it that has no character, no resolve, no backbone, and no self-control.

The Bible says that the flesh is a slave to impurity and lasciviousness (Romans 6:19), serves the law of sin (Romans 7:25), has passions and desires (Galatians 5:24), brings corruption (Galatians 6:8), has its own wisdom (II Corinthians 1:12), wages war against the soul (I Peter 2:11) and has nothing good in it (Romans 7:18). It is the flesh that desires and generates immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, and carousing. (Galatians 5:19-21) It is the weak-willed man inside us.

When we speak of the flesh, or the carnal nature, keep in mind that we are primarily referring to a mind-set, a way of thinking. It is the insanity which keeps us bound up in sin that we know (when we are in our right minds) is destroying us.

For the man struggling with the powerful pull of sexual temptation, the conflict between the flesh and spirit becomes an even more relevant issue in life. Paul said, I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” (Galatians 5:16 NKJV)

Herein is the key to overcoming life-dominating habits: to walk in the Spirit. After 19 years of dealing with Christian men in sexual sin (including many

ministers), I have never found any evidence to dispute this statement. Childhood traumas, frigid wives, availability of pornography, seductive women, or lack of accountability notwithstanding, I have never seen a man in sexual sin who was walking in the Spirit. Every man I have ever dealt with has had one thing in common: not one of them emphasized the need to crucify the flesh (as Paul later mentions in the passage) and to walk in the Spirit.

You can spend years on the psychologist's couch, regularly attend support group meetings, go to a world-famous clinic for sexual addicts, have experiences of a memory being healed, be slain in the Spirit, or even have demons cast out of you. However, if you want to overcome habitual sin, you must learn to walk in the Spirit.

After porn destroyed his life, Steve Gallagher discovered powerful truths that broke his addiction and transformed his life. Based off his popular YouTube series, this book will help you experience the power of these truths for yourself.

Spiritual Change Over Time

This process is a lifelong daily battle. After telling his readers to walk in the Spirit, Paul goes on to say, "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please." (Galatians 5:17) In this verse, we see the daily battle raging inside every believer who wants to please God and yet finds that part of him simply wants to indulge in pleasure and sin.

Everyday we make choices about which spirit will be in control. We can choose to give in to the flesh: vent our anger on others, be sarcastic, indulge in sexual thinking, and be wrapped up in ourselves. We can sit in front of a television, listen to carnal music, or read worldly magazines. Or, we can choose to shield ourselves from the sensualities of the media, control our minds, bridle our tongues, and show kindness to others. Minute by minute, throughout the rest of our lives, we will face choices as to our behavior.

This is where the typical Christian gets bogged down and discouraged. It seems that change will never come, that they are bound to live in defeat. This is not God's desire for His children. While it is true that one aspect of the

spirit vs. flesh war occurs in our daily lives, equally true is that the person who strives after righteousness, struggles against the desires of the flesh, and pursues a course of holiness, gradually gains ground in the contest. This process takes time and requires the believer to diligently cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work. The sincere seeker soon discovers a previously unknown strength forming within him. He will notice that temptations no longer grip him with overwhelming power. His intimacy with God increases, in turn producing a power not present early on in his faith to overcome temptation. Before long, this man will come to know what it means to become a mature saint: to truly walk in the Spirit.

This spiritual growth and development is not automatic. A person does not mature into godliness simply because his salvation experience happened a long time ago. He grows into the likeness of Christ only by daily cooperating with God's work in his inner man.

Subjecting More Than Just Our Sex Problem

One of the first things he must learn is bringing his flesh under subjection. Many sexual addicts plead with God for help to overcome sexual addiction but resist Him when He begins to require change in other areas of their lives. They want Him to come into their inside world and clean out the red light district but leave the movie houses, gambling halls, and comedy clubs.

When men come into the Pure Life Residential Program, they quickly find out that God is not looking to simply help them overcome "one little problem." Rather, He is looking to overhaul their entire lives. These men's lives can be compared to an old, dilapidated shack. God wants to dismantle the old dump and build a palace, but many shriek in terror when they see Him show up with the hammer and crow bar. They feel like they will die if He takes it down. Instead of allowing the Lord to destroy it, they go out and nail a few boards on it, give it a fresh coat of paint and try to convince Him that it is now a worthy dwelling. There's nothing more pathetic than a well-painted shack! This is precisely what Jesus was referring to when He said, "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins." (Mark 2:22) How can the Lord get us out of the slums of defeat if we refuse to allow Him?

As we rid ourselves of the old nature, God replaces the void with the mind, thinking, and behavior of Christ. As we allow Jesus to have more of the territory in our kingdom, we will find that our inside world becomes better

managed and more clean and orderly. As we permit God to empty our old self-nature, we find Him filling us with His Holy Spirit. Thus, a defeated life is gradually replaced with a victorious life. It is not overstating it to say that we desperately need Him to spiritually invade and take over our inside world. As God captures our hearts, conquers our wills, and fill us with His Spirit, we will experience the victorious life we are promised. This is what the Lord desires for us and expects from us.